

# Mexican Life

Mexico's Monthly Review

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MAY, 1951

No. 5, Vol. XXVII



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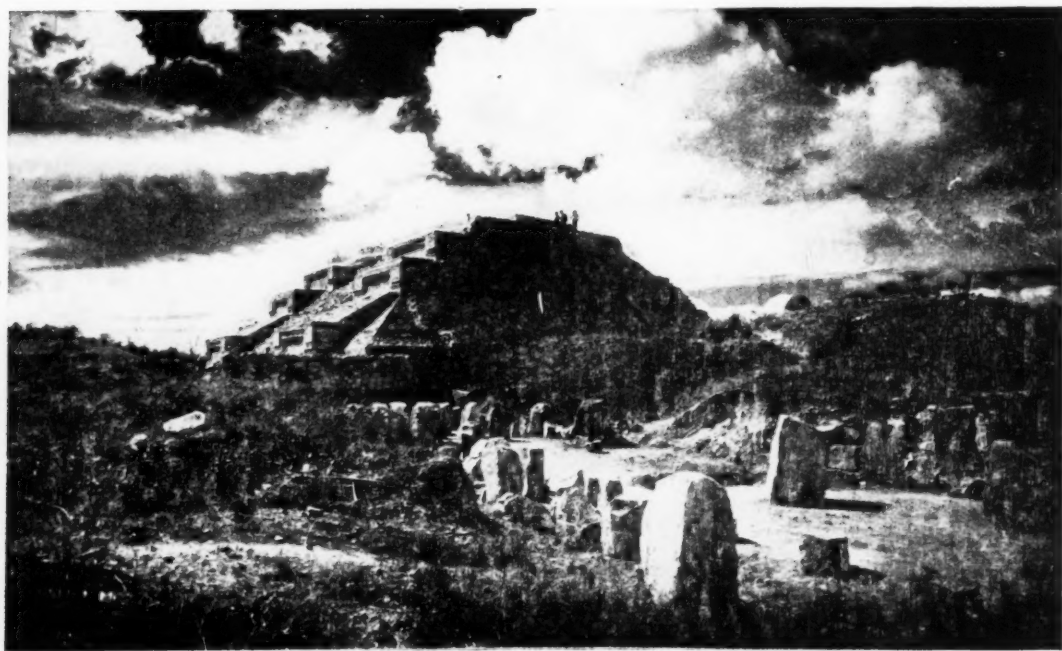
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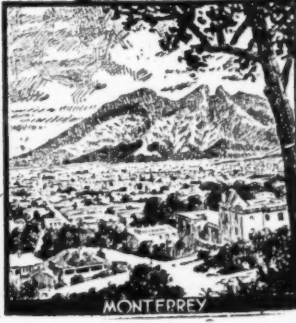
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HOWARD S. PHILLIPS  
EDITOR

## Combatting Inflation

MEXICO'S retarded economy and the extremely low material standards prevalent among the large majority of its population comprise the basic national problem whose solution has been the goal of each succeeding administration during the past twenty-five years. Since President Calles launched the initial comprehensive program of social and economic rehabilitation in 1925, this program has guided the official endeavors of every subsequent government, achieving its highest degree of materialization during the administration of Miguel Alemán.

When President Alemán assumed his high post four and a half years ago he declared that his government would center its task on "combatting poverty." And the course followed by his government has indeed been characterized by a sustained, systematic and nation-wide effort to reduce the extent of this poverty by positive and effectual means. It has sought to increase industrial production by stimulating investment of private capital, by creating propitious conditions of harmony between capital and labor, by developing technical resources and by launching extensive public works. At the same time it has sought to enlarge the volume of agricultural production by establishing security of land tenure through the rigid enforcement of extant laws, by extending the scope of agricultural credit, by improving the quality of seed and methods of cultivation, by mechanization of equipment and extermination of plagues, and, finally, by carrying out major projects of public works, such as the construction of irrigation systems that can utilize to fullest extent the available supply of water, and of roads and railways that can provide an outlet for the crops.

That the results of these efforts have been satisfactory is indicated in the figures of national income, which have reached during the year 1950 a sum of almost 30 billion pesos as compared with 25 billion, 600 million in 1949. This reflects in monetary terms an increase of 11.4 percent, or if adjusted to the increased price level reveals in real terms of goods and services an increase of 6.5 percent, which favorably compares with those presented by countries of more robust economies, such as the United States, Canada, Australia or Argentina.

Mexico's economy has been greatly expanded since 1946, and yet the concrete results of the government's efforts to liquidate poverty have been minimized by the process of price inflation which has reached its acutest stages in the past twelve months. The extent of this inflation is revealed in the staggering increase in currency circulation, which rose to 6,297.3 million pesos in January of this year, as compared with 4,473.1 million in January of 1950. Prices, of course, have followed the inflationary currency trend

An official index that covers only the basic commodities stood at 375 at the end of last February, against the same index of 100 in 1939. It is clearly apparent therefrom that inflation is the arch enemy the government must combat at this time in its aim to stamp out poverty.

In a speech delivered before the National Bankers' Convention held last month in Guadalajara, the Secretary of Treasury, Ramón Beteta, analyzed the problems which confront the government at present and outlined the policy it has adapted in its effort to solve them. He pointed that while banks, industries and commerce and certain sectors of agriculture are enjoying at this time a highly prosperous state, the greatly elevated costs of living are creating severe hardships for the population at large. The government, he said, desiring to extend utmost facilities for the free play of private initiative, has maintained taxes at extremely low levels, as compared with those of other countries, despite the fact that one of the generally accepted methods of curbing inflationary pressure is that of increasing taxation. President Alemán, he stated, has been opposed to such measures in his desire that businessmen may be able to devote a large part of their profits to expansion of enterprise.

The measures thus far adapted by the government, as outlined by Secretary Beteta, comprise: price ceilings on all staple commodities; increase in obligatory bank reserves; suspension of discount operations which private banks have conducted with banks abroad; strict dispositions and vigilance over expenditures of the Federal Government; maintenance of the interior public debt at its present figure; channeling of public savings into productive investment; limitation of external loans; minting of silver currency; suspension of restrictions on certain imports; maintenance of 15 percent ad valorem duties on exports; reduction of interest rates on state bonds; conversion of foreign currency reserves held by the Bank of Mexico into gold and the unrestricted local sale of this metal.

While Secretary Beteta affirmed that it is yet too early to estimate the ultimate results of these measures, he stated that stability in currency circulation has now been reached and that the precipitated influx of dollars which in past months has been responsible for 79 percent of the increase in circulating currency, has been detained, and for this reason it may be hopefully expected that one of the principal causes of price inflation has been eliminated.

The declarations of Secretary Beteta sound a valid note of optimism, for they reveal that the government is leaving no stone unturned in its determined struggle against a foe which threatens to annul its basic aim to liquidate poverty.

# The Craftsmen of Tlaquepaque

By Henry Albert Phillips

**S**AN Pedro Tlaquepaque is just another of those semi-adobe Mexican towns, laid out in rectangular, monotonous streets of endless rows of one-story houses, all seemingly the same. In turn, we met the rival proprietors of the two more famous pottery works: first Fernandez, then Palacio.

Fernandez' place, to all appearance externally, was just another unprepossessing doorway. The door was opened by a little boy and in another minute we had succumbed to the miracle of the Spanish patio again. Fernandez—like Palacio—was rare and charming; an artist himself though not an artisan. His setup might well have been a model workshop in its category, for the world to copy. A broad passageway led into the first patio, which was part of the menage, more or less, although it was difficult to tell just where the fashioning of the pottery began and had its source; everybody and everything seemed to conspire and to contribute. The walls of the patio were tiled with Talavera—blue-and-yellow tiles, even to the playing fountain that was cascading flowers as well as water, supplemented by still other blooms in pots on the balustrated roof. Señora Fernandez, who was sewing in the sunshine, rose as we entered. She had unconsciously contributed to the pattern five bird cages that hung on the wall filled with singing birds. Even the dog that sprawled out in the sun added an effective bit of *dolce far niente*. Jolly Fernandez chuckled over our pleasure and led us into

the next patio. Five Indians sat in a row against the wall surrounded by piles of pottery which they were rapidly decorating. They did not even look up. Although they sat far in the shade they wore their straw sombreros, short-sleeved white blouses, blue jeans and guaraches. One of the boys drew, the others filled in the patterns, always stroking away from themselves with their special dog-hair brushes. This art of designing, so Fernandez said, descended from father to son. They employed neither models nor plans; just imagination. Like all Indians, the workers were beardless, so I thought they were all boys until Fernandez remarked that their best artist "boy" was off that day, celebrating his hundred and fourteenth birthday. On the other side of the court were the modelers. The only tools they used was a flat stick or a comb sans teeth. This patio had once been a large tropical garden. There was a fountain in the wall with a life-sized painting of the Guadalupe Virgin behind it under an arbor. On all sides were sheds, with pottery and tiles in all stages. Under what had once been a beautiful pavilion an Indian was standing barefoot on a great globe of wet clay kneading it. Above, framed in Indian laurel trees was the beautiful plateresco tower of the parish church. Under a shed at the far end sat Fernandez' old mother knitting, her sharp eyes watching the lazy Indians who were packing finished pottery in cases of native live wood bound with rawhide thongs. Whenever they would stop, the old woman would tell the parrot on the arm of her chair about it. It was all in the family and it all came out of the family. To complete the picture, by giving it melody, the bells in the tower began to ring just as we were leaving.

Palacio's was more ornate; a great tiled court where we sipped tequila sitting in finely carved Spanish chairs, while an Indian girl in costume drew water from the huge tiled fountain in the center. A little group of workers sat on the tiled floor under the bow of the arch beneath a screen of vermillion flowers dripping from the walls of another patio, the sunlight etching scalloped patterns on the floor.

In the evening we visited the odd plaza of Tlaquepaque, which was entirely enclosed by a wall and portales, patio style. The whole colorful population walked round and round while the band played in the central kiosk. Betweenwhiles, the mariachis sweetly played and sang native music, outside the walls, on the edge of the market. Here the hill people distinguished by their shortish trousers and colored woven "medicine belt" of many pockets, in which each carried his own drugstore of herbs—lingered and lounged together with their burros cruelly hobbled with a thong tightly wound round muzzle and forelegs.

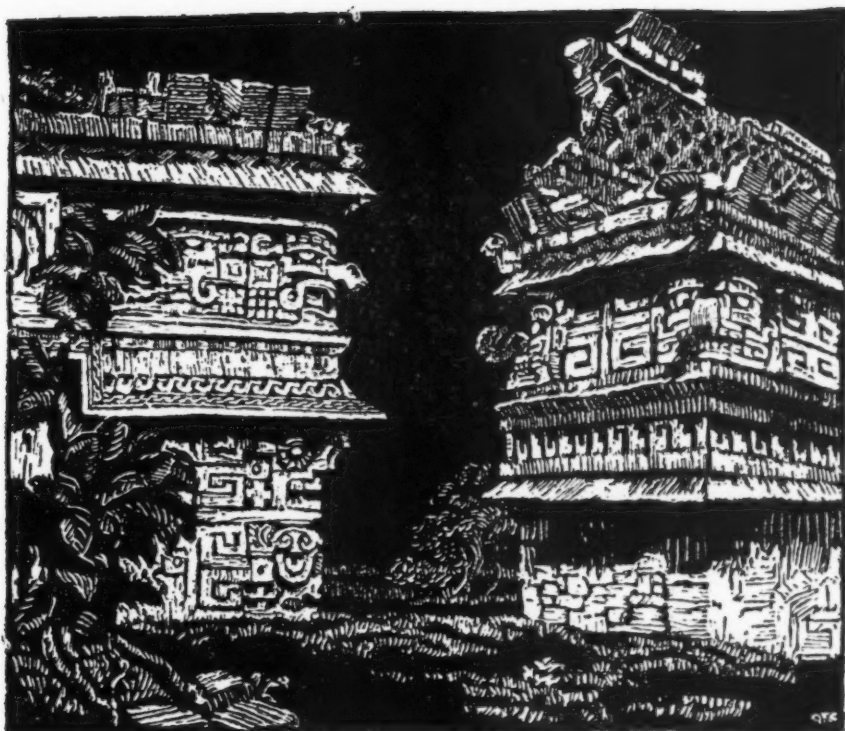
The glass "factories" of Tlaquepaque are equally interesting, their work approximating a slightly higher grade of artistry and variety. The most distinguished perhaps is that of Odilon Avalos. Señor Avalos is an artist of parts, as well as an accentric. I had to make several visits before I was accorded the honor of meeting him in the flesh. He controlled designing, production and sales with a grip of iron. He was adamant on having his factory retain its unique individuality and somewhat primitive state. Ori-

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Wood Engraving.

By Francisco J. Vázquez.



Wood Engraving.

By R.C. Watts.

## Chichén Itza

By Hudson Stode

**T**HE city of Chichen Itzá had died before Cortés was born. The jungle had already drawn a pall of concealing green over the consecrated place.

On the Fourth of July in 1838, John Burke, an American engineer working on a henequen plantation half a day's walk to the south, had rediscovered the dead city. John Lloyd Stephens says that Burke was the first white man to behold the ruined temples after the collapse of Spanish domination in Mexico. When Burke, the engineer, and Stephens, the New York lawyer, looked on these stupendous relics, the fecund jungle had smothered the sacred city until only bits of its treasures were to be discerned. It was Stephens who told the world about the temple area which was then privately owned by a Spanish cattleman, ignorant of its significance. A century ago, when the feudal system was yet in rank flower, the whole of Yucatán was owned by less than a hundred Spanish families. And the once proud and defiant Mayas, who had valiantly kept the conquistadors at bay for sixteen years, had become so abject that the laborer crawled like a dog to kiss the hand of the alien overseer who had just finished lashing him. The plantation-owner would shrug and say of descendants of the temple-builders, "The Indians cannot hear except through their backs."

Now with the recent restorations and excavations of the Carnegie Institution and the Mexican Government, the architectural treasures of the city have been brought to light again, but its mystery is still to be fathomed. The hieroglyphs about the temple walls have yielded few of their secrets, and even on these scientists rarely come to accord. When the first Christians arrived, they not only burned the books, but made it a rigid practice to obliterate traditions, as well as memorials, wherever possible. Who the ancient Mayas were, whence they came and why, no one can say with absolute authority. A titled English anthropologist made a lifework of trying to prove that they were of the lost tribes of Israel. That they were an agricultural people, cultivating maize and beans and squash, we know, and that they had achieved an advanced civilization in some respects superior to European civilization at the same time in the Middle Ages is stoutly maintained. We know that after they had established their culture they were invaded and conquered by certain strong tribes from the north, and these mingled their ways and their religion with those of the defeated. The architecture of the Maya speaks for itself straight to the brain and heart of man today as something remarkable that only a developed people could have achieved.

We did not tarry now for either admiration or talk, for it was almost dinner-time. We drove on out of the clearing, and turned to the right into the woods. A half-mile farther we reached the grounds of Mayaland Lodge. As we drove up the winding road to the door of the hostelry, on this Fourth-of-July afternoon, I thought of John Burke's long holiday trek that other Fourth of July in 1838 which had ended in wonderment.

This hostelry sits unique and luxury-offering in the midst of a jungle, with temples and pyramids and ruined palaces for neighbors. Spread about an inclined garden, landscaped with subtle care for tropical naturalness, it splits into many parts: a long low central building, which is mostly enormous veranda and diningroom, and several white-stucco bungalows built in ancient Mayan style with overhanging roofs of fresh-scented thatch.

I was shown to the north room of Bungalow No. 1. The room was immaculate, with hand-carved modernistic-looking furniture embodying Mayan motifs, and yellow field flowers in brass bowls. I undressed quickly in the sweet odor of thatch that filled all the breathing-space between maroon-tiled floor and hay-green roof. I took a hot shower and a cold one, and then began a rubdown in a state of semi-intoxication and wonder. For out of the rectangular window, set chest-high, I gazed through an unprecise clearing in the trees upon the magnificent Temple of the Warriors. The great masonry platform of white stone with its superimposed temple and its colonnade of a thousand roofless columns gleamed against a screen of primeval verdure. As I watched, the illumination from the setting sun touched the temple with its alchemy and turned it into a mass of white gold. I stood leaning against the window frame, entranced, and let the evening air do the towel's function. Twilight is brief in the tropics. As the sun dropped swiftly, it sent up a last red flare that bathed the temple in rosy radiance and turned the pale gold pillars to shafts of pink

pearls. Quickly the transfiguration was over, and the temple became a blur of oyster-white in the dusk.

\* \* \*

By the time I had dressed, the night creatures were tuning up for their accustomed summer evening's concert. In the dining-room I was seated at a small table across from the beautiful Norwegian-looking wife of a Yale law professor. We dined well on pavo en pebre: turkey breast cooked with sour oranges, almonds, onions, and tomatoes. For dessert we had green limes stuffed with shredded coconut and stewed in sugar until almost crystallized.

While coffee and liqueurs were being served, a distant low drumbeat captivated everybody's attention. It was a jungle sound that was unexpected. I thought of the Indians beating on turtle shells with deerhorns whom the Spaniards had heard before they were routed in their attempt at conquest in 1535. But the insistent sound came not from the forest, but from the little settlement half a mile away. We learned that a traveling marionette troupe was giving a "gala" performance—a love romance, a risqué farce, and a bullfight, all for the price of one admission. I offered to entertain at a box party. With the aid of one uncertain flashlight and a thousand vagrant fireflies, three of the guests, Henry, and I picked our way down the muddy road to the show. The playhouse turned out to be the side veranda of the general store. We were given choice seats, on cracker boxes on the front row—eight cents each.

The veranda was crowded beyond capacity. The overflow of spectators stood on the bare earth alongside the veranda like the groundlings in Shakespeare's time. Between us and the improvised stage, three variegated infants of the master puppeteer and his lady lay sleeping on burlap sacks, like offerings to the Tragic Muse. The performance was illuminated by one acety-

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Wood Engraving.

By R.C. Watts.





Mural Detail.

By José A. Mouroy.

# What's Behind Our Revolutions?

By German Arciniegas

**W**HEN U.S. Newspapers mention one of the Latin American republics, it is usually in connection with an attempted or successful revolution. Is there something in the complicated racial make-up of those peoples or in their geography that inevitably leads to disorder and revolt?

From the very first day of independence, Latin America's political life was an unstable one. The civil wars of the last century established what is very nearly a tradition of anarchy. But why was this the pattern in the south, while north of the Rio Grande problems were settled with the success that has made the United States first among the world powers?

Students of this fact often place too much emphasis on the racial combinations which make up the La-

tin American countries, or on whether the population lived in the Andes, on the seacoast, or in the jungles. This ignores the historical process, which is fundamental. The fact is that the two peoples, north and south, came into being and developed under the same democratic love of liberty. But from the very first they moved in opposite directions.

In Latin America, conquest came first. In a matter of thirty years—from 1513, when Balboa discovered the Pacific Ocean, to 1548, when Alonso de Mendoza founded La Paz on the highest plateau of the Andes—Spaniards and Portuguese overran three quarters of the American world. Next came the colonial period, which lasted more than two and a half centuries. Then the wars of independence, in which vic-

tory created for the victors the problems of self-government.

In the United States, things happened in reverse order. Here the colonial period came first, and the inhabitants governed themselves almost from the beginning. There were little more than one hundred fifty years of colonial life—the Mayflower anchored in Plymouth harbor in 1620 and the Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776. Once the colonies were separated from England, they put into operation on their own, principles of government they had been practicing for some time. The conquest was put off, to be accomplished a hundred years later.

The three hundred years between the Spanish conquest and the winning of the West by the North Americans gave the Pilgrims and their descendants time to establish a civilization in the thirteen English colonies. This fact affected the whole historical process in the North. The Spanish conquest resembles a mediaeval museum piece. It was accomplished with lances, swords, and bucklers, with coats of mail and heavy armor, with greater trust in St. James the Apostle than in arms. To keep the advantage horses gave them over the awe-struck Indians, the Spaniards had to lift the struggling animals in rattan baskets up the precipices of the Andes. One of the most effective arms—decisive in the conquest of Darién and in many other places—was dogs, which bit the Indians to death. These are pictures from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, which seem more like cartoons for Gobelin tapestries than a still from a motion picture.

The Pacific coast was explored, and the conquistadors proceeded to the conquest of Peru in vessels made by carpenters who knew nothing of shipbuilding. These were built in shipyards improvised in the wilderness, on the banks of rivers. They made sails from scraps of shirts, ironwork and cordage from heaven knows what.

By contrast, the conquest in the North, postponed until the middle of the nineteenth century, had the help of the steam engine and several other modern inventions. The gold rush to California started thirteen years after Samuel Colt had invented the pistol that made his name famous. To get to California or to Montana, people went on wheels. Instead of struggling over the nearly impassable Andes, the emigrants' covered wagons stampeded across the plains west of the Mississippi. Even before those who went by prairie schooner could get there, California's new El Dorado was reached by those who embarked in New Orleans in steamboats, crossed the isthmus of Panama by land and took passage on the first line of steamers to ply the Pacific coast.

Washington, in all his warfare, never reached the right bank of the Mississippi. Bolívar and San Martín, on the other hand, had to play their roles on a stage that, from Atlantic to Pacific, from the Caribbean to the southern tip of South America, extended over both sides of the Andes. In winning the independence of Spanish America, as in its conquest, everything was done on an unprecedented scale. In North America during the colonial period as well as in the winning of the West, there was a central, compact core from which mass migration set out, leaving no vacuum behind. It was the frontier that moved; not the bridgeheads, not the lance tips. In Spanish or Portuguese America, the first ambitious strides in each historic period were born of extraordinary enthusiasm stimulated by such words as "honor" and "glory." The soldier of the conquest dragged himself over mountain passes that he knew would lead to death, because he was not going to have any one questioning his honor. In the same way, the liberator in the war of independence cherished his glory.

The speed of the Spanish and Portuguese conquest changed, first of all, the color of the family. The family—except perhaps in the case of gypsies or nomadic tribes, which have attained no higher culture than can be produced under canvas—is the fruit of repose. The Pilgrims of the Mayflower sailed from Plymouth—and they were the prototype of all who followed—without cutting family ties. Of the hundred who came on that ship, twenty-eight were children. During the voyage two more were born. They crossed the Atlantic to found a colony, not to undertake a conquest. And women's skirts were no hindrance whatever to the development of the program. Today North American writers note with unconcealed surprise how those families begot dozens of children, as many as were biologically possible.

For a Quesada, a Cortés, a Valdivia, an Irala, a Ponce de León, an Hernando de Soto, it was unthinkable to set out except at the front of masculine armies. Occasionally a bold woman accompanied the captain, sometimes one of those Indian women who for love opened the way among peoples of alien tongue. She was just one more soldier. None of the warriors brought his wife from Spain to these enterprises. And when the armies halted in Mexico or in Cuzco, or wherever else, love, obeying the simple laws of nature, went on joining white and red.

In the North, the Danes, the English, or the Germans of the thirteen colonies had no reason for having anything to do with native women. As their settlements grew, they pushed the Indians farther west until the red man's back was against the wall. There has been much talk of Spanish cruelty, and there has been too much ado about the extermination of the native races by the conquistadors, taking the theme from the impassioned plea by Fray Bartolomé de las Casas. That cruelty is undeniable, but it should be considered not so much Spanish, as the legacy of an epoch: the Middle Ages. But the final fact is that in Spanish America many millions of Indians remained alive, as is plainly evident now. The extension of the conquest from Mexico to Chile would have been impossible without the collaboration of the aborigines. In the thirteen colonies in the North the opposite occurred, and only a few native specimens survived to be anthropological studies or to satisfy tourist curiosity.

In a book on the development of the United States I read recently: "In a century and a half, the Americans colonized effectively an area of about 200,000 square miles, more than twice the size of Great Britain." The author underlines this as a remarkable fact, which indeed it is. But it is a fact that impresses the Latin American reader as a drop in the bucket. Chile alone, which is one of the smallest nations of Latin America, has 286,000 square miles. In thirty years during the sixteenth century, Spaniards and Portuguese raised the flags of their kings over lands three times as large as all the Old World.

Bernal Díaz del Castillo described Hernán Cortés in a phrase that might be applied to all the conquistadors: "He had a heart that did not rest." Prescott's judgment of him was similar: "He was," he said, "a knight errant." But what word, then, should we use for Hernando de Soto, who after taking part in the entire conquest of Peru, came to the banks of the Mississippi to meet his death? Or for Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, who after a ten-year odyssey from Florida to Mexico, leaving his bloody footprints on the vast amphitheater of territory that overlooks the Gulf, returned to Spain to be made the governor of Paraguay and the Río de la Plata, beginning anew the story of his misfortunes? Or for Jiménez de Quesada, who

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# The Tourist's Mistake

By Kingsley Tufts

**M**Y cousin, Manuel Velez, the barber, and myself do not see eye to eye on many things. For example, Manuel knows little about women. Because he is close with his money, he has not learned much. For myself, I have an aching heart for Rosita Santee, but I would not go the length of myself for money. So it is a question, and our days in Santa Monica are full of argument.

Manuel is sitting now in his barber chair smoking his cigar and I am putting the brush to the brown shoes Rosita's father has left with me two hours ago. We are looking out on Pico Street. The sun has moved with the afternoon, and there is a small square of shade in front of the shop.

"Paco," my cousin says to his cigar, "the world is full of things I want. Sometimes I feel sorry for myself."

"It is the heat," I suggest, but I, too, am not at peace with my own mind, and do not believe what I am saying. For a long time now, Rosita has been after me to make something of myself, which is a way of saying she will not marry me until I have more money, perhaps a business of my own. She has offered to keep her job at the Castilian Kitchen and to help me. Because I was not born rich, I feel like a heel. She is more beautiful than the flowers in her own black hair, and I am not happy two steps away from her.

"Well, well! Another turista!" Manuel says, disturbing me from my thoughts.

A fat car with a small, canvas-covered trailer on two wheels has stopped in the street. It is a dirty car, and the windshield is full of stickers. A heavy gringo in a green wool shirt climbs out and wipes his face. He slams the door on the poor woman inside who holds a map. He walks around the trailer, and it is clear that something has happened which is about all he can take. He scowls at us as if we had insulted him.

"Is there a garage near here?" he demands.

"No, señor," Manuel says.

"Where's your telephone directory?"

"No telephone, señor," Manuel says.

"A hell of a place!" he snorts. "I've got a flat tire on my trailer."

"So?" Manuel observes through his cigar smoke. "An old tire, I suppose?"

"What's the difference?" the gringo shouts. "Who can I get to fix it?"

Manuel looks to me for an opinion. "Paco, do we know anybody in the neighborhood who could fix an old tire?"

I shrug. "Not this afternoon, señor."

The gringo walks to the curb and pulls open the door on the woman. "Marie, I'm through!" he shouts. "I'm fed up! This trailer business was your idea, but this ends it!"

He jerks the canvas from the trailer, and begins pushing things into the back of the automobile. There is a new tent and vacuum jug and stove. There is a skillet only a little black, blankets stuck full of fox-tails, and folding beds and fishing poles. It does not take long to fill the car.

When he has all he can manage, he swears at what is left over and throws the canvas back on top of it. He kicks the pin from the tongue of the trailer. With an ugly laugh at Manuel and me and everything,

he brushes his hands together and climbs into the car.

"I have thought sometimes I would like to travel," Manuel says, "but I see now it is not always the answer."

As the fat car jumps away from the curb, the woman sticks her hand from the window and waves to us. We both wave back, and when I look at Manuel again, there is a quick light in his eyes.

"A gift from the ravens," he says, "The Good Padre has not forgotten us."

"It is a good tire," I remark at the curb. "It is a fine trailer." Because there is an out-of-state license on the back, I pull down a corner of the canvas to cover it. Something which does not belong in California would awake the suspicion of the police, perhaps. "There are a couple of nice folding chairs under this canvas," I point out.

"We could use the canvas for an awning," Manuel replies. "The frame we have is no good without something on it."

Concerning the ravens, I feel that Manuel has said more than he knows. One could rent such a trailer for perhaps as much as three dollars a day. In a small way it would be a business, though perhaps not such a one as Rosita dreams about. Yet to be strictly honest my cousin is entitled to half, and that is a problem. Manuel, I hope, will not think of the rent idea himself, before I have found a way to handle the thing to better advantage. But I can see he is already considering the money possibilities of what we have here. "Perhaps they will come back for it," I suggest to discourage him.

"Not a chance," he answers. "You heard what the gringo said."

Señor La Paz, who cuts tombstones, appears suddenly out of nowhere for a razor he has left to be sharpened, and Jesús Rinaldo, who is no longer working at the shipyard, slips out of the shade from across the street.

"I know a certain party who could use that trailer," he says.

When he is not reading the picture books in our shop, this Jesús Rinaldo spends much time in Gardena trying his luck at a poker palace which he calls "the laundry." Anything which is not nailed down sets his mind to going.

Señor La Paz observes, "I would like that trailer to haul headstones in. My son is looking around for one." He shakes his head over the flat tire.

I am wondering how many people have seen what has happened to us, when Luis Gonzales moves from behind a palm tree. Luis is a man of many ideas who fishes small salvage from the pier with a grappling hook. He is a person without desire and can be trusted in matters of judgment.

"What do you think of the trailer?" I ask.

For a long time he stands studying the situation. "You could make a shoeshine wagon out of it," he says finally. "You could travel around the apartment houses and shine shoes. You could make a million dollars." He smiles at us. He shrugs his shoulders. "But who wants a million dollars any more? I would say it should be sold, and the money spent to make people happy."

My heart has jumped in my chest at his idea of the shine wagon. With such a shoeshine business I

could reap a harvest and marry my Rosita. I understand with Luis that money itself is nothing, but I know, too, that for me my Rosita is everything.

"That is something to consider," I say carefully, but already I see a shine wagon instead of a trailer, and it is a beautiful thing.

There is much small talk back and forth which means nothing, but I see in all faces that there is a desire to share in our good fortune. Presently Señor La Paz goes off muttering with his razor, and Jesús Rinaldo thinks of business elsewhere, giving a long look to the curb from the side of his eyes as he leaves. Luis Gonzales helps himself to my cigarette papers and tobacco, and strolls away down the street. It occurs to me that he will report the trailer to his brother, José, and they will think about it. José, who cuts lawns, will think he could haul his tools around in such a trailer. To put it bluntly, I am afraid that since we have got something for nothing, all of Pico Street will be looking for a way to help us take care of it.

My cousin, Manuel, has been very silent. "Paco," he says finally, "possession is nine points of the law. I think we'd better bring those chairs into the shop and put up that awning before something happens to it." He, too, I think, has been considering that we have many friends.

I am quick to agree, and when we have the canvas tied on the frame with strong knots, we roll the trailer out of the street and far back alongside the shop under the window of our room.

"If anybody touches it, we will hear him," Manuel points out.

Even with a flat tire, the trailer rolls like a bicycle. It is indeed a fine, well-constructed vehicle, and with a few boards could be made into a magnificent shine wagon. I could push it anywhere, and in every big apartment house there would be hundreds of shoes, just waiting. Maybe later I could get another one, and hire another man, perhaps on commission.

My cousin thumps his hand on the flat tire. "Paco," he says with inspiration, "if Sam Hondo comes by tomorrow, we should have him fix this tire. It is not good to have so much dead weight on a flat inner tube."

Sam Hondo has a garage many blocks up Pico Street, but he sometimes stops at our shop on his way to the beach where his father-in-law, Señor Gomez, operates a merry-go-round. He could fix it right from his truck.

"Manuel," I say soberly, "what would you say your interest in this trailer was worth? What would you take for your part?"

"It's not for sale," Manuel answers. "Why?"

"I want it for myself," I confess.

Manuel surveys me thoughtfully. "Luis Gonzales had a good idea there with that shine wagon," he says. "Don't think it slipped by me."

"But, Manuel, you understand why it is! You have a business—a nice little shop. I must have a business too."

"That Rosita!" Manuel says with disgust. "We have a good fifty-fifty proposition here. Besides, where would you get the money to buy me out? I must think about it."

"When I'm making money I can pay you off," I protest.

"When you are making money, my cousin, the interest will be worth more," Manuel answers.

His point is a good one. "Think it over, anyway," I say in despair. "And I will speak to Rosita. It is possible she will not like the idea at all."

But when I see my Rosita in the evening, and tell her everything, she throws her arms around my

neck and kisses me as if I am already a big success.

"That Manuel!" she cries. "He has kept you under his thumb long enough! I have some money saved and we will buy him out together."

There, I think to myself, I would only be trading thumbs. "No," I say, "I will find a way myself."

We are sitting on a box at the edge of the open-air picture show for people in automobiles, where Rosita's brother is hired to watch the parking and who lets us in free. She squeezes my hand in the dark, and I make a promise to myself that before I am through I will have a hundred shine wagons operating all over Los Angeles. What is bad is that I do not yet have the first one.

When I arrive home, my heart still pounding and my head spinning from the good night my Rosita has given me, I find my cousin fast asleep. His bare foot sticks from the covers, and to it is tied a string. I follow this string through the window and see that it is fastened outside to the trailer. My cousin, Manuel, is a quick thinker.

In the morning we are awake early. My cousin complains that he has not rested well for keeping an eye on the trailer. For lack of sleep, my own brain feels the size of a pea. But when we have had our coffee and opened the shop, and Manuel unfolds the two chairs that belonged to the turista, I say bluntly, "Rosita is all for me going into the shine-wagon business. What is the least you will take?"

There is an old watermelon seed stuck to the wooden arm of the canvas chair, and he picks it off with his nail file. "No deal," he says. "Either we have a partnership or I take a percentage. Business is business."

While we are talking, Rosita's father, Señor Santee, from the poultry store, comes in for his brown shoes, and he is all smiles.

"I hear you have had some good luck," he says. "At least there should be a haircut on the house." He climbs into the barber chair. "Take your time, Manuel," he says, and I consider, with a laugh inside me, that Rosita has put him up to this.

At this moment little Pedro Gonzalez comes snooping around on his way to school. Manuel sends him off to see if he can find Sam Hondo to fix the tire, in case he is going by.

Pedro is hardly out of sight when his uncle, Luis Gonzales, and his father, José, appear. They sink with great weariness into the new chairs of the turista.

"No lawns to cut today, José?" Manuel asks suspiciously.

"I am in a mood for a haircut," José smiles, rolling a cigarette. "Perhaps also a shine."

Luis says nothing, but leans back, and his eyes rest with a long meditation on the canvas.

This is no more than is to be expected, perhaps, but when Señor La Paz and Jesús Rinaldo also show up, I am beginning to get worried.

"That razor you sharpened has a nick in it," Señor La Paz complains. "I will wait while you grind it out."

"Another hot day," Jesús Rinaldo yawns. "My room is already a bake oven." He stretches himself in the cool of the shop. "I would not like to be a turista traveling on such a day," he observes.

Since our shop is not large, by the time Señor Padilla, who keeps the dry-cleaning store across from us, comes in, there is not a vacant chair, so he climbs on my shine box.

"Fix 'em up," he says. "Nice day today, but maybe not so good as yesterday."

The thoughts that are filling my mind now have become a misery to me. Perhaps somebody has informed the police about the trailer. Maybe they are



here to see what happens and ask for stolen property.

"I observed what happened yesterday," Señor Padilla is saying as he studies the new chairs. "I have been told that last night the gringo stayed in town at the Casa del Mar Hotel, where my brother is janitor. This morning he was eating his breakfast while the car was being greased. The wife is now out buying souvenirs." He pauses and glances from the side of his eyes at Manuel. "I wonder what the gringo is thinking about this morning?"

A shadow crosses my cousin's face, but he does not stop on Señor Santee's hair. "You do not know all the facts," he says smoothly, "or you would not worry yourself about what belongs to another."

At this moment Sam Hondo appears outside in his truck and shouts that he has been told we have a tire to fix. When we got out to show him about it, the others follow to the edge of shade under the awning. Sam gets his tools from the truck, but he is in no hurry.

"I can work better where it's cooler," he says, and before we can say no, he has the trailer in front under the awning.

More and more it presses on my mind that my cousin and I are in the middle of great trouble, and it is only a matter of time. It is the stillness before a cloudburst.

When Luis Gonzales speaks, it is like the first few drops of rain. "If I had my life to live over," he says, "I would not own even the clothes on my back. In this world nothing is worth having but good friends."

Presently Manuel turns on the small radio which he keeps behind him in the towel closet.

"Turn it softer," Señor Padilla requests. "If there is a police siren, I want to hear it."

Señor La Paz slaps at a fly. Jesús Rinaldo stretches his legs. A bad restlessness moves in the others.

"On my birthday there was wine for everybody," José says dreamily. "If I remember, Manuel, it was you who brought it."

"Time changes a man," Luis reproves him. "The more one has, the more one wants."

"One will have nothing unless he shares it," Jesús Rinaldo says darkly.

Suddenly I see what is the trouble, and it is a thing to cheer me. They are all thinking about how it can be made possible to share in our good fortune, and they have come to a dead end. But in my hope I have reckoned without Jesús Rinaldo.

"A trailer presents a problem," he observes in the silence. "There is only one way to answer it, and that is to set up a trailer corporation."

I look to my cousin fearfully, and see he is far from happy. He has climbed into his barber chair, and sits now like a king watching the revolution. He is considering how to save the pieces, but he knows it is a losing proposition.

"It is a bad time for corporations," he objects. "Besides, there are many conditions."

"We will consider them," Luis Gonzales nods. He is studying Jesús Rinaldo with some respect.

"Paco must be president and I must be treasurer," Manuel says firmly. "We must have control."

"Nobody should control," Luis answers.

"That's right. You are outvoted," Jesús Rinaldo declares. "But since this shop will make a good main office, it is okay to be president and treasurer." He looks around at the others. "Okay, officers elected?"

"Okay!" they nod.

"What is a corporation?" José Gonzales asks gently.

Jesús Rinaldo looks on him with pity. "In the shipyard I belonged to the union," he says. It was

explained all about corporations. It is very simple."

While we watch, he tears the front page from last Sunday's funny paper and lifts the scissors from Manuel's pocket. "It is impossible to divide up the trailer," he says, "so we will divide up the paper."

"That is a quick idea," Señor Santee smiles.

"We are nine men present," Jesús Rinaldo says when he has counted. "I will cut out nine pieces of paper, and we will divide the profits from operations nine ways."

It occurs to me that Jesús Rinaldo has been thinking of this thing all night, and I see I am losing my trailer, not to one Manuel but to nine people.

"What are the pieces of paper for?" José asks.

"They are shares of stock, my stupid friend," Jesús Rinaldo informs him as he hands the papers around. "For each share of stock, one piece of profits."

"This is not fair," Luis Gonzales says. "Paco and Manuel have done more than we have in this matter. Give them each another piece of paper," he instructs.

He is a just man, this Luis, and will not see his friends robbed.

"But that cuts the profits in eleven pieces," Jesús Rinaldo objects. "Who can divide by eleven?"

"I can," Señor Santee says. "I will assist Manuel, the treasurer, when the time comes."

Jesús Rinaldo snips out another picture each for Manuel and me. "There is one picture left," he says quickly. "I will take it for making the organization. Twelve is a better number. We will call this corporation The Pico Street Transportation Company. No objection? Carried!"

"Not so fast!" Luis Gonzales objects. "This is not a union meeting."

"What about the guy who left this thing?" Sam Hondo speaks with a worried face. "Have we got clear title?" Since he deals with automobiles, Sam is suspicious about titles.

"That is no problem," Luis informs him. "This is the same thing as salvage in the ocean."

Suddenly my cousin, Manuel, stiffens in the barber chair. I follow his look to the street, and I see what it is that has made his eyes pop. It is the end of everything. A fat car has eased up and wheeled around in the street. For a fact, it is the turista, and he has his wife beside him.

"The gringo!" Manuel whispers. He leaps from the chair as the big tires slide against the curb.

"He will have to fight the corporation," Jesús Rinaldo says through his teeth, and after that, except for the flies, there is not a movement in the shop. The corporation has become painted to the furniture.

For a few seconds the turista stands on the sidewalk a bull in the chute. When he comes, it is not for a haircut.

"This is my trailer!" he shouts. "This is my stuff!"

"I beg pardon, señor," my cousin says, and shakes out the cloth as if he expects the gringo to climb into the chair. Sometimes he is a cool number, my cousin.

The gringo waves to the awning. "That's my canvas! What's it doing up there?" He sees the chairs under Luis and José, and his face becomes a worse purple. "Who's responsible for this?" he cries.

Manuel shrugs. "It is the corporation, señor," he apologizes. "You must take it up with the corporation."

"Corporation?" the gringo cries. "What corporation?"

"The Pico Street Transportation Company, se

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# Patterns of an Old City

"LAS GORDITAS"

By Howard S. Phillips

**N**O ONE knew exactly what the sculptor had intended to express in the group of obese and bulbous figures—a woman surrounded by three children with round, flat, uplifted faces and bulging eyes fixed in the sightless stare of the blind into space—which was poised over a disproportionately large pedestal under the almost barren branches of ancient serawny ash trees in the center of the little plaza. Whether its Chichimeca idol-like contours embodied profound solemnity or a mere gaucherie, the recondite message of its maker was an unfathomed enigma; though in the neighborhood the strange little monument—the sole capricious note of ornamentation in a shabby and impecunious midst—bearing the thousand odd significances bred in the whimsy of that many minds was affectionately known by everyone as "Las Gorditas."

Like the rickety boxlike tenement houses which sprang up in the surrounding blocks, the monument was of a comparatively recent origin: a parvenu poaching in the shade of the ancient trees, which in the newness and intrinsic instability of its surroundings acquired the status of a landmark. "Las Gorditas," with their inarticulate stare fixed on the roaring traffic, came to specify a pause, a place, a tryst, a designation. Lovers met here after dark; through the mornings old people basked in the concrete benches under the trees; in the afternoon the voices of rollicking children rang in the air, while at all hours vagrants and drunks found their way to this little plaza to sprawl on the ground.

"Las Gorditas" meant many things to many people, but to Mela, Tita and Chita it bore a vague suggestion of their own effigy, and upon this suggestion their minds evolved countless exciting conjectures. For them the little plaza was a sanctuary for the untrammelled play of illusion. Sitting on a scraggly patch of grass, in the afternoons when they had finished their homework, by way of improvised dialogue they enacted an interminable play of make-believe wherein each carried out a consistent and logical part. Around these squat and pudgy little figures they spun an endless fantasy which transformed all the prosaic objects about them into a dream-world whose inexhaustible mystery they could zealously explore.

Essentially, however, this play of make-believe was not an escape from reality but its sublimation by way of myth and parable. The fanciful plots stemmed directly from their own existence. The cast and mise en scene were their own family household—papa, mama and themselves—, and, as exemplified in the tableau of the "Gorditas," the inherent problem of this household, and the usual source of their theme, of dramatic suspense and the denouement of the theme's final happy solution, was the absence of their father. This absence signified a sad incompleteness; it defined the essential problem of their existence. Their father was a beloved stranger, a person who dwelled in a remote and fabulous realm which they could approach only in their flights of fancy. His absence, however, was a grievous void which was always happily filled in the end by his return, by his final and permanent reunion with his family. This was the invariable happy ending of the play they evolved.

Each time Gutierrez set out on his homeward journey he looked forward to the brief visit with his family with diminishing eagerness. For though his children always met him joyously and his wife made a self-conscious effort to seem pleased that he was home, somehow, despite all his caution, his visits usually wound up unpleasantly. Always the spirit of home-coming was soon destroyed in reawakened resentment and the resumption of bitter quarrels. Riding in a crowded bus or a shabby daycoach, as he neared the city he gradually yielded to a sense of unease and frustration; he felt defeated, forlorn and helpless, as if instead of hard and illy remunerated effort his journey implied dereliction for which he had to face his punishment.

Taking stock of his depressing situation, he often thought that life, with all its defects, had been better before he went on the road. The earnings of a clerk in a hardware store were deplorably small, but at least they were together then, and somehow, in their precarious fashion, managed to get along. To give up an employment with a fixed salary and to venture a job as traveling salesman on commission, he realized, had been a hazardous and perhaps even a foolhardy undertaking. But it was useless now to think about it. If he had made a mistake, it was now too late to make amends.

During these melancholy homeward journeys, his mind, freed for the time being of the usual business preoccupations, often turned to retrospection, to the probing of the peculiar circumstances which brought him to his present fate. And these self-probings made him realize that for all its circumstantiality human existence follows a certain fixed design which man cannot elude—that if he had erred, he had been brought to his error through a perfectly consistent and ineludible sequence.

Like any normal man he had been guided by perfectly normal ambitions. He wanted a home, a wife and children, a peaceful decent life. But he had committed his initial error in forgetting that it takes a good provider to make a home. He had not perceived this primary error throughout the early years of his marriage for his salary seemed to suffice for their modest needs. Even after their first child was born their poverty did not mar their happiness, because they were deeply attached to each other and their drab existence was not shorn of hope. It was some years later, by the time the other two girls came into the world, that it became a cruel burden. There was yet a period of cheerless fortitude when they solved their problem by austerity and self-denial, by moving to cheaper quarters, by foregoing their weekly picture show, or by reducing their daily fare to a diet consisting mostly of rice and beans. But gradually the constant brunt of fear and worry crowded out such fortitude. Their poverty was an inescapable fact, unrelieved like an incurable malady by a trace of hope. The air they breathed was charged with the conscience of failure and guilt and the spells of brooding silence were often broken by bitter reproach, by nagging and mutual condemnation.

It was then that Gutierrez began to perceive that everything in life must wear out with time and that even the sturdiest of human relations have a limit of endurance. And yet he still believed that he had the

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Oil.

By Stefan Hirsch

# Ejutla

By Neill James

**I** TARRIED in the south awaiting good weather to trek the pre-Cortesian caravan route to Tehuantepec Isthmus. In the epoch before the introduction of draft animals, aborigines traveled this route on foot. The trail traversed boggy marshlands and high sierras. As long as a year was required to make the round trip down to Peru. Today Oaxaca merchant caravans barter in Tehuantepec; stout Mixtecas and crafty Zapotecas match wits in trade with beautiful but brainy Amazons. A one-way journey requires a week or two weeks, depending upon the weather. I had planned to travel with a merchant caravan. They were immobilized by the rains. Rain continued to fall daily.

Meanwhile I cast about for other interesting destinations and collected a deal of information about people living in inaccessible pockets in the wilderness. There was a village down on the Pacific Coast, peopled with pure Africanos—50,000 of them, whose ancestors had been brought to the New World by white blackbirders and sold as slaves to sugar planters. The Church created a Black Christ for them to worship and flatteringly allowed it to originate in Tututepec, their chief village. The problem of getting to Tututepec was equally as difficult as crossing to

I listened to stories of the "leopard" people, Tehuantepec. The Africanos would have to wait, malady which afflicts the pigments of many people Spotted and mottled, they are the victims of a strange living in the hot lands of Oaxaca State. Had I been

a bird without wing trouble, travel to this other world was but a matter of a few hours... Had I been a bird.

Another choice was Sola de Vega, a sizable town in the heart of the Sierra Madre. Again, roads were impassable.

"Oh, you must see Yelalag," an Oaxaqueño urged when he found me studying a wall map in the hotel. I had heard of Yalalag. "There's a woman in the front lobby with a costume from there," he continued. "You must see it."

We went over to where a tall woman was displaying native costumes to four tourists. She was a handsome creature in a heavy white woven cotton huipil (sleeveless tunic) over a long straight skirt. A solid silver Dominican cross hung from a coral chain about her neck.

"Imagine a village of women dressed like that! I'll go!"

My sudden determination took my friend by surprise. He mistakenly thought he had persuaded me to make the journey. "It's a little dangerous," he countered. "More than half the people are blind. They are afflicted with a strange tropical disease," he added soberly. "It would be interesting for you to see the place during the dry season." He emphasized dry. "It's high in the sierras. Mountain roads are impassable now."

There were other enticing places, all equally remote. I was reminded of my sister Jane's remark when one morning she found me lying in bed study-

ing a large wall map on the opposite side of the room. "You are the greatest traveler in the world!... You are always taking a mental journey somewhere before breakfast!" Now, even a mental trip was difficult in Oaxaca with the rain beating down upon the roof. Well, it's a stupid adventurer indeed who travels abroad during the wet season and complains of rain! Natives live their entire lives in these places and manage somehow.

One day Octavio, my charro friend, told me about Miahuatlan, "a town at the end of the oxcart road" where mysterious "white Indians" lived.

"It is possible to get to Miahuatlan if you are willing to rough it," he said. Octavio owned a large soap factory, oil works and a few other businesses in Oaxaca and was going to Miahuatlan on business. He invited Cecile and Marta, visiting Americans, and myself to come along if we could endure hardships. "Bring slacks. The truck ride beyond Ejutla will be rough," Octavio warned.

I knew then the trip would be rough. Mexican men detest women in trousers.

We took off in a comfortable but crowded bus and traveled over the section of the new Pacific Highway completed as far as Ejutla, about two-thirds the distance to Miahuatlan. We lodged in the town's one hotel, primitive but attractive, managed by an Indian. Rates were modest. Ejutla, an old trading center for Indians, will one day become an important town. Standing in the large plaza looking toward the grandiose church and long portales, I could believe I was in a metropolis until my gaze wandered to the Indian market with stalls sheltered by awnings. The temperature was warmer than in Oaxaca.

The most striking note in the town was the light felt sombreros in sharp contrast to the somber black worn in Oaxaca. Hat markets in the portales specialized in felt sombreros priced at from four to fourteen pesos and straws from 50 centavos to three hundred pesos. Hats for charros began at a hundred and twenty pesos.

We remained two nights in Ejutla. While Octavio attended to business, Cecile, Marta and I, ducking between showers, saw the village and shopped in the market, which had little besides food, pottery and small handmade household necessities, none of which fitted our needs at the moment. Octavio bought

castor beans, hides, cocoanuts and animal fats. He also collected payment for goods previously sold, and hoped expenditures would offset collections. Country people deal only in silver pesos and the weight of one's money has to be considered. Prosperous, plump Octavio returned to the hotel followed by an urehin lugging a money bag half-filled with silver.

The morning following, Cecile and Marta giecfully donned slacks and prayed for dry weather for the trip to Miahuatlan. I wore unlucky fawn drill riding breeches which, a short time later, were to feature in two brushes-with-death adventures. We boarded a covered truck with wooden benches along either side. Instead of standing among gasoline barrels and sacks of produce, in the rain, we sat, sheltered. Gasoline tins and sacks of corn filled the center aisle. In Ejutla, women in slacks attracted undue attention. On the truck every one was too busy hanging on, moving out of the way of shifting sacks of corn, and shrinking from slanting rain to notice pants. The tortuous slippery wagon road was beset with boulders. At noon the driver halted and passengers got out for a rest and refreshments served in aatched shelter beside the road. A woman knelt on the earth floor, patting and baking tortillas. We ate soup made of yellow squash blossoms, served in pottery bowls, and tortillas hot off the grill piled with frijoles and topped with a dab of chili.

Far away in a distant valley we saw an oasis surrounding the white dome of a large church. It was Miahuatlan. The road led down, down. Passengers slid forward, the rear of the long seats emptied, sacks of corn shifted, piled forward against the back of the truck driver's seat. We laughed and held on. Octavio's small black hand-bag filled with heavy pesos kept sliding against our feet. I was impressed that he could toss his unlocked handbag filled with money into the truck and not even bother to watch it. In a bankless town money is indeed a problem. Octavio encountered peso difficulties from the time he entered Ejutla. Pesos collected for soap and huaraches far exceeded the amount he was able to spend for hides, castor beans, cocon, peanuts, pecans, and fats.

Observing Octavio's peso plight, for the first time in my life I felt that money was indeed a nuisance.

## Day's End

By Alice Ewing Vail

I see the fluid moments overflow,  
Out of the candle's core, but slower, slower;  
The year, the tired year is burning low,  
I see the lambent flame drop lower, lower.

The candle flickers as the wick is spent,  
I light another taper by its flare,  
And wonder, just a little, where it went,  
That other tall brave candle that was there.





Oil.

By Mireya Lahuente.

## The Patio and the City

By Trent Elwood Sanford

**T**HE HOUSE of the city presents quite a different picture from that of the village, though, overlappings are evident in the more sophisticated house of the village, built near the plaza. The house with a single room has a roofed porch supported by wood posts with carved post-caps; or, in the somewhat larger house with several rooms, the porch extends the length of the house, has a roof supported by a series of brick arches plastered over, a floor of brick, and a railing made up of curved tiles in a variety of patterns. Flowers potted in large jars or oil cans (a colorful touch found in even the simplest houses) line the railings and hang from the roof beams. Such a house has several windows, perhaps covered by iron grilles; and its adobe walls are plastered and painted.

The next step is the L-shaped house with covered porch (corredor) on two sides facing a partially enclosed garden where a high wall may complete the effect of privacy. Rooms on a third side, forming a U-shaped house with a garden either open on one side or enclosed with the addition of one wall, leave but one more move of the building blocks to make the typical Spanish house surrounding a patio.

The patio is the most distinguished feature of the city house. It is not only the center of family life, but is the architectural key around which the house is built. A monumental doorway on the street front, often serving as both carriage and pedestrian entrance, leads, through a passageway known as the zaguan, into the patio, off which the principal rooms open directly. Across one or more sides are open corridors,

either colonnaded in pure Classic style or arcaded. Arches may be round, oval, or even of mixtilinear form.

The outer doorway of the house is usually filled with a pair of massive wood doors, often elaborately paneled and quite frequently containing either a small door about two and a half feet wide opening independently of the larger doors or separately hinged paneled sections which can be opened merely for the purpose of inquiring with regard to the wishes of the visitor or for transacting business. At some distance behind the street doors and separating the patio from the entry-way is a secondary portón, a grilled gate or pair of gates, either of ornamental wrought iron or of wood. During the day the great doors of the zaguan often stand open, affording the passer-by a fleeting glimpse of the flower-filled patio beyond, while the secondary gates, which are kept locked, serve as a measure of protection. A masonry bench is usually placed in the entry-way for the benefit of visitors; or, in the more open house in the small town, such a bench is built adjacent to the gateway, against the garden wall, protected in many instances by a tile roof.

In the tropical and sub-tropical sections of the country the patios are quite spacious, often luxuriantly planted as small gardens, and frequently open on one side, leading into a larger garden or orchard. In the cities of the plateau they are somewhat smaller and are usually paved with brick or stone, with, however, a fountain at the center or placed against a wall. Enclosures of masonry, called arreas, sometimes cir-

cular, sometimes octagonal, and frequently faced with glazed tiles, are built on the pavement to house a tall palm, an orange tree, or a fig tree; while against a column or a wall a bougainvillea may climb to spread color along the balcony. The balconies of patios in two-story houses are usually lined with gay flower pots (macetas) of a great variety of sizes and shapes, each with its separate flowering plant. Gayly colored birds in cages complete the riot of color.

There is often a secondary patio around which are built the kitchen, store-rooms, and servants' quarters, with the dining room built between the patios.

Except in the case of the comparatively modern suburban communities, isolated houses are uncommon. Houses of the cities are almost invariably built on the street line as a continuous line of one- or two-story facades. In the larger cities, such as Mexico City and Puebla, houses of two or even three stories are common; but Colonial houses of four stories are exceedingly rare. The Iturbide Palace was an example sufficiently rare as to cause as much comment and apprehension at the time it was built as did the four-story house of Dr. Le Monnier in New Orleans, that city's first "skyscraper."

Facades of these houses are usually severe and plain except for ornament concentrated at the entrance and perhaps around the windows. Some of the numerous exceptions to this rule, especially in the "palaces" of Mexico City, have already been described; but in the provincial cities especially it was just the doorway that received any elaborate decorative treatment. It is the entrance doorway that is the exterior keynote of the house. Though the rest of the facade may be plain, any stone carving or any heraldry or sculpture employed is concentrated there. About the middle of the sixteenth century the family escutcheon became an important decorative feature of houses in Spain, and the fashion was carried over to New Spain, where it was employed on many houses throughout the Colonial period. In other examples, a niche containing the statue of a saint was placed directly over the doorway.

First-story windows are usually protected by grilles, which may be found in a variety of design in wrought iron. Behind them are solid wood folding blinds, hinged to swing in. Windows of the upper stories often have balconies with wrought-iron railings, frequently extending continuously the length of the facade. On the simpler houses, or on houses in such a city as Patzcuaro where wood is plentiful, grilles and balcony railings may be made up of turned wood balusters, with balconies supported on carved wood brackets; or they may be of carved stones; but in most places wrought iron is the popular material. A wrought-iron railing over the monumental entrance is frequently found on the old Colonial houses; and another favorite feature is the corner balcony supported on corbels or on a decorative column.

In the lower altitudes and on the hillslopes where rainfall is the heaviest, the houses have pitched roofs of curved Spanish tiles, the degree of pitch being supposedly determined by the amount of rainfall; although in many places fashion is probably chiefly responsible for the kind of roof used, precedents established many years ago being religiously followed. In such wet places as Jalapa and Córdoba pitched roofs of tile are universal, except where, in some of the poorer houses, corrugated iron has encroached to mar the landscape. But in drier Taxco, and in Cuernavaca too, tile roofs are employed; while in Patzcuaro and near-by towns in Michoacán a distinctive feature of the house is the tile roof of rather low pitch, with supporting rafters extending far out beyond the front wall and carved on the outer ends to give an ornamental effect. The

passer-by is thereby sheltered against both rain and the noonday sun.

In most of the higher and drier parts of the country the flat roof is the rule. It is constructed of heavy timbers, spaced from twelve to eighteen inches on centers, with thin bricks placed on them. On top of this layer of bricks is placed a dirt fill, often as much as two feet in thickness to serve as insulation. A coat of mortar is spread on top of the dirt fill and in it another layer of bricks is embedded, to form the finished roof. This type of roof construction is commonly employed on large city houses as well as the smaller houses of the villages. Even in Puebla, though glazed tiles for decorative purposes are found in abundance, the Spanish roofing tiles are conspicuously absent. The roofs are all flat.

A variety of materials is used in the construction of the city houses, but they are confined to various forms of masonry. In most places wood is not plentiful, and, in the cities, frame structures are practically non-existent. The use of wood is confined largely to structural beams and columns, and to doors and windows, and occasionally extends to balustrades. Window and door frames are of wood, but door and window casings and wood bases are simply omitted. In rare instances wood floors are found; and on occasion a wood paneled ceiling breaks the rule.

In the smaller houses the popular and inexpensive adobe is used; but more commonly walls of the city houses are of brick or of stone, or a mixture of both. Walls of mixed masonry, plastered over, are common. Brick walls are usually plastered over. Stone is used both for structural walls and as trim around doors and windows, and for columns and arches. Bricks, in addition to structural use in walls, and in ceilings where they span between the roof beams, are used decoratively in a variety of ways—for floors, in combination with glazed tiles as a veneer for wall surfaces, and, moulded in a variety of shapes, for catarillas (open railings used on porches and in garden walls).

Plaster is used extensively on both exteriors and interiors, not only as a protective covering for brick or adobe, but modeled as ornament in overall wall patterns and friezes. A favorite feature in modeled plaster is the concha or shell form used over deeply splayed windows or doors. In addition to effects gained by the use of colored tiles, painted plaster surfaces lend added color to the decorative scheme of the Mexican house, very simply achieved by the use of water paint in soft flat tones. Sometimes a whole surface of a house is painted in delicate hues of blue or yellow or pink; but, more commonly, color effects are gained by the use of broad painted bands. These are used as dados, as trim around doors and windows, or as a cornice at the top of a wall.

Some of the fine old Colonial houses have been taken over for commercial uses and some have been converted into hotels. Others have had a less fortunate fate, many having been turned into vecindades, or tenements, with several families living in each, the patios, partially partitioned, strung with washing and alive with babies and chickens. Still others are used as mesóns, where on market days, the visiting merchant finds shelter both for himself and for his burro.

Such is the general pattern in the city, especially on the plateau—home life and color confined largely to patios cut off from a street which gives little indication of what lies behind those ornamental doors—long streets of houses, each house built tightly against the next, narrow walks of flat stones, cobblestone pavement in the street, and the bright sun beating down on the long treeless expanse of pavement and on walls of stucco or of stone punctuated by ornamental stone entrances and wrought-iron grilles.

In spite of similar general patterns, houses and patios vary somewhat in character in different cities. Some of these distinguishing characteristics are worth mentioning.

In Cuernavaca, where the climate is semi-tropical and the air is notably soft, the older houses present the usual unbroken line along the narrow streets. The houses are of adobe or of mixed stone and mortar, but all are plastered and painted. On the inside, the patio is frequently abandoned for an open plan with corridors which open onto walled gardens. Railings of the corridors and the garden walls have patterns of brick or tile in various shapes. There is scarcely a patio that does not have a fountain or well and rows of macetas with potted plants. Many of the gardens are extensive and there is always an abundance of flowers in bloom. Nowhere else in the country is the bougainvillea found in such profusion, both the delicate magenta shades and the brilliant red.

Taxco, because of varying levels and precipitous grades, is an exception to the street-front rule. The patio plan is rare and the isolated house is not uncommon. The one-story house is usual, except where advantage has been taken of the site to plan the house at various levels. Most of the houses are of adobe, plastered, and painted in soft colors. The tile roofs are carried by widely spaced rafters, and the overhanging eaves frequently require additional support in the form of wooden braces against the wall. The single row of rooms with a long corridor, or the L-shaped house, are the most common. The corridor is everywhere in evidence, its projecting tile roof supported by great square piers or fat round columns, the railings between columns filled with geometric patterns of tiles lined with rows of potted plants. Walled gardens are sometimes made by cutting out the rock of the mountainside above and are held in place by buttressed retaining walls of stone.

The busy capital of Mexico furnishes the opposite extreme. The two- and three-story houses are more monumental than in other cities, their patios more formal, usually paved with stone, but nearly always containing a fountain, and usually arched with formal planting. In the very metropolitan city of Puebla the two-story house predominates, and though structural walls are usually of stone, a distinguishing feature of that city that has already been described is the use of glazed tiles combined with unglazed tile or brick to decorate facades. The patios are characterized by second-floor corridors supported on arcades with massive columns and arches, or on arches springing from massive stone corbels, giving these courtyards an almost medieval appearance, relieved, however, by the delicacy of the colored tile used in dados and on fountains, and by the coloring of the blossoms of a fig tree or a bougainvillea. The one-story houses typical of Oaxaca are unusually massive, with great carved doorways and simple, heavy cornices and mouldings relieved by a wealth of wrought iron on window grilles and balconies.

In Guadalajara, in Querétaro, and in Saltillo far to the north, there are patios with elaborate architectural details and a profusion of flowers hidden behind severe facades on the street; and often a secondary patio where one may look out from the dining room onto a wall covered with morning-glories. The long rows of one-story houses of Monterrey are exceptionally plain and severe, but the zaguanes lead into patios always well filled with flowers. Horsedrawn calesas line the streets in front of the hotels and one is sure to be urged to take a drive to see a "beautiful patio." It turns out to be as beautiful as described and one is given a gracious welcome by the host and invited to sip cocktails "on the house." After two

or three, unless he has good sales resistance, one walks out in a pleasant daze with several bottles under his arm which have been bought at "only a fraction of the price north of the border."

The houses of Morelia, flat-roofed for the most part, present the typical unbroken line on the street, with facades quite simple and severe except for occasional, unusually fine details in stone such as decorated corner piers and finely carved stone balconies. The domestic pattern of near-by Pátzcuaro is very different. The houses there are distinguished by low tile roofs with widely projecting eaves. Built of adobe, most of them are of one story and stepped down the sloping streets, the unbroken line of the facades and the stepped, overhanging eaves making an interesting and exotic pattern quite oriental in effect. The facades are often painted in three colors, one for a dado, one for the walls, and another for the under side of the eaves.

Guanajuato, like Pátzcuaro, one of the picture cities of the country, is totally different in appearance. With none of the gentle slopes of the hills of Pátzcuaro and none of the overhanging tile roofs of that city, the little square, flat-roofed houses of Guanajuato seem to climb all over each other as they struggle up the tiny canyons which serve as streets. Their simple facades with practically no cornice are broken only by occasional balconies and bands of color. Here and there, high up on a plain wall, a row of flower pots gives indication of a tiny terrace with a magnificent view out over the city and the mountains.

The cities and villages on the slopes of the Gulf Coast which do not respect the authorized rainy and dry seasons present a very different aspect. Such are Jalapa, capital of the state of Vera Cruz, and the Indian villages which lie along the road as it winds down among coffee plantations, orange groves, and tropical woods to the swampy lowlands reaching inland for some miles from the gulf port of Vera Cruz. The jungle villages seem African with their huts of bamboo and thatch, naked brown children running in and out, Indian mothers bent over their endless job of preparing the next simple meal, and the smoke of cook fires pouring out of the open sides of the primitive dwellings. The whole countryside is a tropical Eden. Jalapa is brilliant with blooms; and at Banderilla, five miles farther up the highway and the first of the tropical towns after leaving the higher mountain slopes between Sierra de Agua and La Joya where forests of weird-looking moss-covered trees grow out of a volcanic upheaval, there is an extensive tropical garden where azaleas, gardenias, camellias, roses, and many kinds of lilies and orchids grow in profusion. The weazened little caretaker is proud of his handiwork and leads the visitor through acres of blossoms, generously proffering his sombrero when the drizzle starts in again without warning.

Jalapa itself is a veritable garden. Its quaint cobbled streets climb as in Guanajuato, but instead of being bounded by austere barren mountains they lie among rolling hills of dense verdure. The houses are pink and blue and yellow, and the gardens are a riot of color. The tile roofs extend out over the narrow walks so that one is given some protection from the rain until he meets a pedestrian coming from the other direction. During the few days I spent there the chipi-chipi was almost incessant and, like the Jalapeño I felt that I should pray to Holy Mary to let the sun come out. I had tramped around in the rain and mud, had driven down to Vera Cruz in the rain and to Coatepec in more rain had had to keep my car in a lumber yard some distance from my hotel and splash up on foot over the cobbles and avoid the streams

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# Gloria of Taxco

By Dorothea Deans

**G**LORIA is the daughter of our cook and therefore a member of our Mexican household. For our stay in Taxco she is ours to nourish and to shelter. Considering that she is a healthy five-year-old, her presence is peculiarly light and ethereal in essence. Like a mood or an emotion, she has a transient quality. During the first week she was little more than a wraith, a softly smiling, brown apparition that projected itself around the kitchen door and became suspended there, the easing absorbing most of her figure and leaving only her head swinging forward like a round, dark sample of native pottery.

To know Gloria you must act upon it. You must mark what time she goes to and comes from school. Then you will see her emerge from the kitchen door, cross the yellowed grass in front of the verandah, slip through a fence and turn up the hillside. Where a school can be hidden on that bald mountain slope you have no idea, but she carries an exercise book in one hand and a pencil in the other and when she returns at noon and you put out a hand for the book from where you are sitting at the pool a whole page

has been filled with two words in a spidery but regular hand, *mi madre*. In the afternoon she devotes a page to numbers, line after line of figures from one to ten.

In the blazing Mexican noonday you get a good picture of Gloria. She is built light as a fawn in limbs and appendages, tiny, rounded arms and hands, long, delicate bare legs and short feet. But her body is surprisingly compact and her face above the short neck is round and bland as a melon in the market. And, of course, line and contour are cast in unbroken bronze—bronze so dense you have to draw her to you to pick out a highlight in the broad plains of her face. No polish or patina illumines the placid features that merge into each other from the rounded brow, the short nose barely arched above the wide cheeks, the bland upper lip, the flat surface of the lifted chin, the narrow lips parted in a smile over the tiny teeth. Only the eyes are unfathomable dark reservoirs of lustre and reflection. When she gives you one of her long glances, she turns her head a little slantways and the lower lids of her eyes elevate a trifle until they seem slightly Mongol.

Deliberately the child's physical presence establishes itself with you. An unavailing gesture to tidy the coarse fringe of dark hair that circumscribes her head and escapes the braids and colored yarns becomes a habit with you. You look to see if her shoe laces are tied for fear she trip on the cobbled mountain road. You check her pocket for the handkerchief she takes to school. You know the weight of her head against your arm, your shoulder, the cherubic curve of her body through the thin and faded garments. When she places her hand in yours, you slip your fingers up the exquisitely shaped arm in search of a ticklish spot. You practice ridiculous and outmoded tricks, the only ones you know, upon her, such as snapping off her nose and substituting your thumb for that dismembered organ. You teach her to exchange a bear hug.

\* \* \*

But most of all you come to know and love the small and pretty sounds that are so great a part of Gloria's personality. In her ears are suspended silver bells and your first movement when she approaches is to extend a finger and gently, gently, set ringing the infinitesimal hammer in a cup hardly bigger than that of the lily-of-the-valley.

Conversation is limited to monosyllables, but you find Gloria more sympathetic with your lack of Spanish than her mother and other Mexican adults, who obviously cannot believe but that if they talk long and fluently enough you can understand. Gloria knows better and she also knows how few words are needed. All your lapses she covers with a whispered and reassuring *Si, si*. And with tact and courtesy she has substituted "Hello" for *Buenos dias*. Knowledge that she is a perfect mimic came as a surprise one evening when, as she leaned close in the early dusk, you dreamily murmured, "Tiny girl—tiny girl." The words came back to you at once—tiny gur-r-r!—the 'r' purring and rolling in the way that makes Spanish reminiscent of the Lowland Scottish vernacular.

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Water Color.

By Foujita.





Water Color.

By Ximenes.

## Two Words for One . . .

By Dolores B. Jeffords

**I**T has been claimed by certain psychiatrists and child psychologists that it is not advisable for a child to learn to speak in two languages—that having to learn two words for one object tends to confuse him, and this confusion is augmented by the different sentence-construction of the two languages.

Notwithstanding, I know of no ill effect suffered by my brothers or myself as a consequence of having grown up, so to speak, in two languages. At all events, we have never needed to consult psychiatrists, as some do who have been troubled with only one language.

Although my parents were Americans, their home was in Mexico, and their servants and most of their friends were Mexicans. The lullabies that hushed my infant cries were sung in two languages, my mother's "Rock-a-bye, Baby" alternating with the plaintive intonations of my Mexican nursemaid:

Rique, rique, rique ran,  
 Las maderas de San Juan  
 Piden pan, no less dan;  
 Piden queso, les dan un hueso.  
 Rique, roque, rique ran.

From that beginning, everything in my life has had a duality perhaps not easy to imagine, for those who have known only one country.

It would be interesting to recall, were it possible, how I distinguished between the two languages when I first began lisping them, but it was undoubtedly not, at that time, a conscious process. It must have been simply an acceptance of the fact that what mother called milk, Anastasia called *leche*; that one asked mother for water, and Anastasia for *agua*; that mother's "Come here, Baby," and Anastasia's "Ven aca, chita," had the same meaning.

This duality, however, was not a matter of words alone. When school days came, it involved a double set of studies: Spanish spelling and grammar at school, English spelling and grammar at home; the history and geography of Mexico at school, and the history and geography of the United States at home. When I hear children complain of the ghastly time they have, learning the grammar and history of one country, it recalls the double doses of history we had to absorb, the verbs we had to conjugate in duplicate. Moreover, there are two verbs "to have" in Spanish (*haber* and *tener*), and two verbs "to be" (*ser* and *estar*), all irregular, so we conjugated those in triplicate.

\* \* \*

There were two Independence Days: the Fourth of July, when my brothers and I annoyed a politely unprotesting neighborhood with firecrackers; and the Sixteenth of September, when there were music and parades, and patriotic speeches at the theater, and at night a band concert in the Plaza de Armas, climaxed with skyrockets and Roman candles. Incidentally, the 16th of September, not Easter, was the day of days for new clothes.

Our birthdays were celebrated in the privacy of our own family, but it was on our saint-days that our Mexican friends brought us gifts. The saint-day idea has certain advantages over the observance of birthdays, at that. You don't have to keep a list, easily mislaid or overlooked, of the birthdays of relatives and friends. If a friend is named for a sufficiently prominent saint, you can't miss the day; and in the case of more obscure saints, you can ascertain that date from a calendar showing the days of all the saints. Then too, for those who have become reticent about their age, the saint-day is not directly associated with that subject. It eliminates the birthday cake and candles, and all jokes concerning them.

We also enjoyed two kinds of Christmas, though they occurred on the same date: an approximation of the accepted American Christmas, and the kind we

shared with our Mexican friends—minus Santa Claus, Christmas trees and "Christmas rush," but certainly not minus a reverent recognition of the wheretore of the day.

Even superstitions were often dual. In Mexico, Tuesday is the jinx day instead of Friday. "En dia martes ni te cases ni te embargues," warns the adage. "On Tuesday, neither marry nor embark." And although Mexicans credit a cat with a multiplicity of lives, just as we do, they allow it only seven.

We encountered most of the well-known adages, too, in both languages. "When in Rome, do as the Romans do" became "A la tierra que fueres, has como vieres." "Haste makes waste" translates into another jingle, "Quien cose apurada, pierde la puntada." Seldom are the actual words translated, but the same moral is conveyed. "You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear"—"Aunque la mona se vista de seda, mona se queda"; "Hunger is the best sauce"—"Para buen hambre no hay mal pan"; "Half a loaf is better than none"—"Afalta de pan, buenas son cemitas." The equivalent of "From bad to worse," or "Out of the frying-pan into the fire," invites a good-natured jibe at neighboring Guatemala: "Salir de Guatemala y entrar en Guatepeor."

\* \* \*

Our Mexican playmates had Spanish names for the games we knew by their English names as well. And when it became expedient to settle some matter by the well-known "Eenie meenie mynie moe" method, we recited an even more meaningless gibberish:

Tin marin de dos tingue,  
Cucara, macara, titiri fue.

Perhaps we should have had neuroses and jangled nerves—but we didn't. Even our double school tasks did not seem to have any dire results. True, we did not study Spanish as a foreign language—we simply learned it, naturally and effortlessly, along with English, by hearing it constantly. That, undoubtedly, is the best way for anyone, child or adult, to learn a language. But it is difficult for the adult, even though supplementing with painstaking study this natural process of learning, to achieve the spontaneous fluency and the authentically native pronunciation and accent, so easily acquired in childhood.

From my own experience I would say that the child is fortunate who has the opportunity to know two languages and two countries. He will find life at least twice as interesting, twice as broad and rich, throughout his mature years.





CAMPESINOS. Oil.

By Ezequiel Negrete Lira.

## Among the Newer Painters

By Guillermo Rivas

**V**IEWING collective exhibits of works by our younger or lesser known artists is always a rewarding experience, for it enables us to discover new talents and to form a notion regarding the future prospects of our art. We enjoyed such an experience contemplating the pictures assembled at the fourth annual Salon de Primavera and those at the collective exhibit of works by public art teachers, recently offered by the Galeria Romano.

These two voluminous and highly varied shows, containing an unusually high proportion of praiseworthy works, were mainly significant for the fact that they revealed the trends prevalent among a fairly wide cross-section of our emerging generation.

By and large, the components of these group shows may be broadly divided into two classifications: those who contrive and those who create—i.e., those who have the technical ability to fashion pleasing and workmanlike pictures which, however, lack emotional or intellectual depth, and those who by means of technical equipment, of imagination and feeling create a personal interpretation of a given object or scene.

The paintings reproduced in these pages have been chosen from among those which in our opinion belong in the latter, or creative, classification.

The minute and beautiful design of "Campesinos" by Ezequiel Negrete Lira, remotely suggesting an influence of Henri Rousseau, and the delightful naïveté of his thematic treatment, lend this painting veritable charm and distinction.

Awarded the Saturnino Herran Medal, the painting by Angela Saavedra is a splendid example of good portraiture, where representation and interpretation achieve a fine union.

In "Mezquital" by Pablo Ramirez Oviedo, pleasant realism is very effectively combined with symbolism in order to achieve social significance.

An austere elegance and a sensitive character delineation mark the subtly stylized portrait by Leopoldo Estrada.

"Flor de Manita" by Rolando Arjona won the José Clemente Orozco Medal at the Salon de Primavera. Surrealist in theme and composition the plastic values of this painting imbue it with a kind of grotesque lifelikeness.

"Seashell" by Carlos F. Vazquez attests the painter's unusual ability to achieve profound poetic significance from a very slight theme.

Incisive linear structure dominates the excellent composition in the portrait by Carlos Felipe Vazquez.



PORTRAIT. OIL.  
 (Awarded the Saturnino Herran Premium)

By Angela Saavedra.

"Hurricane" by Francisco Diaz Pegueros stands out for its dramatic expressiveness achieved with very simple means.

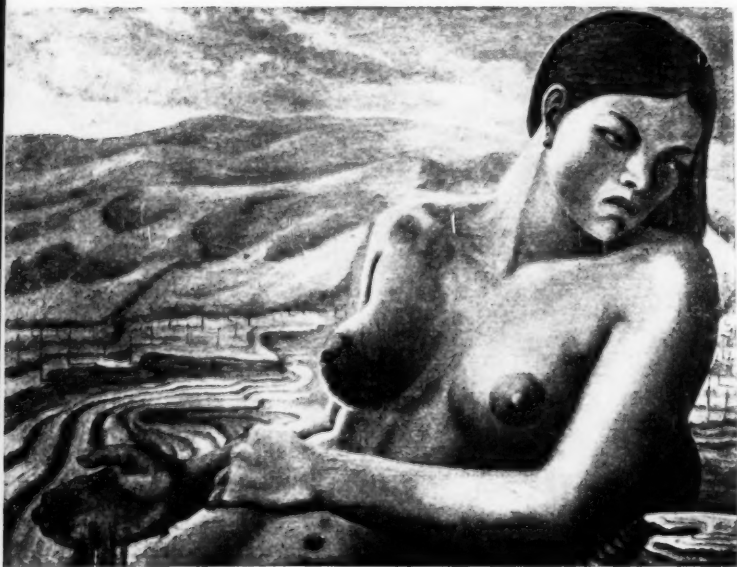
Though quite representational in style, "Papan-tleca" by Angelina Vertiz de Barteiz, reflects a sound understanding and a successful assimilation of traditional influence.

A landscape painter of the older school, Agapito Rincón Piña, achieves a quite delicate mood in his depiction of pines along the slopes of Iztaccihuatl.



HURRICANE. OIL.

By Francisco Diaz Pegueros.



MEZQUITAL. OIL.

By Pablo Ramirez Oviedo.





FLOR DE MANITA. Oil. By Rolando Arjona.  
(Awarded the José Clemente Orozco Premium)



SEASHELL. Oil. By Carlos F. Varquez.

PORTRAIT. Oil. By Leopoldo Estrada.





FANTASMA. Oil.

By Angelina Vertiz de Bartz.



PORTRAIT. Oil. over masonite.

By Carlos Felipe Vasquez.



LANDSCAPE. Oil.

By Agapito Rincon Piña.

# Un Poco de Todo

## FIVE INTO TWENTY

**T**WENTY Foreign Ministers have been meeting last month in Washington with Secretary Acheson on problems of what is now known as the Western Hemisphere but was once known by the more interesting name of the New World. The distinction between Old World and New World was very clear when in 1822 Secretary Acheson's predecessor, John Quincy Adams, and President Monroe, supported by Henry Clay, Speaker of the House, resolved, after long meditation, to recognize the independence of five revolted Spanish colonies: Mexico, Colombia, Peru, Chile and La Plata (Argentina). The five by processes of division and additions, notably that of Portuguese Brazil, have become twenty—ten in South America, six in Central America, Mexico and the three island Governments of Cuba, Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Mr. Acheson has been consulting the twenty Foreign Ministers on questions, among others, of hemisphere defense. President Monroe and Mr. Adams took their historic step for hemisphere defense without consulting the newly established republics and without the advice and consent of the Senate. No Great Debate was held on the Monroe Doctrine. Yet it became a very effective shield for all Latin America, supported as it was by Great Britain, which really ruled the waves in King George IV's days. During a long period when the land-hungry Powers were laying hands on every unoccupied foot of Africa and every unclaimed island in the distant seas the Latin republics, weak and with vast expanses of unused land, were let alone. The Monroe Doctrine has been discarded in favor of a mutual treaty, but our now proud Good Neighbors know that it served them well even while they complain vaguely of the policies of the Colossus of the North.

President Monroe boldly announced that the Old World "system" was not to be re-established in the New World. By a strange coincidence the head and front of that "system" which Monroe and Adams were determined to exclude from the New World was the same Power that leads the "system" the Western Hemisphere is called upon to resist today. Czar Alexander's Holy Alliance was regarded as the great danger from the side of Europe, though it was a weak reed compared with Stalin's Cominform bloc. Russia under the Czar was quite as contemptuous of American democracy—though much less threatening—as Communist Russia under Stalin.

When George Canning, the British Foreign Minister, proclaimed at this time, in his most famous speech, "I called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old," he was taking too much credit to himself. The New World had been slowly coming into existence for more than three hundred years before Canning resolved to recognize the revolted Spanish Colonies. But recognition by the two strongest Governments of the New and Old Worlds was all that the Spanish colonies needed to set them on their way. Their military victory was sealed soon afterward and the Old World definitely retired from the New. Twenty Foreign Ministers at Washington attest the completeness and durability of that separation. At the same time an Inter-American Conference which has to concern itself with problems of the whole world is a sign that the isolation of the New World, fervently desired by Monroe and Adams, is out of date in the days of Truman and Acheson.

Today as in 1823 the New World is summoned to redress the balance of the Old, although not all the twenty Foreign Ministers at Washington saw the point. An Old World "system" which has fastened itself on large expanses of Europe and Asia has to be excluded from the New World. This "system" is headed not by a doctrinaire ruler by divine right but by a ruthless dictator who has come up from the people. He commands great armies, powerful allies and a vast network of propaganda and espionage. He has loosed a war in the Far East while building up his forces in the Middle East and Europe. He has destroyed the balance of the Old World more completely than Napoleon ever did. To redress the balance a policy of "containment" is being tried. The task which confronts the New World today is thus vastly more difficult than the task of asserting its own independence of the Old World.

## BIRTHPLACE IS RELATED TO LEADERSHIP

There was a conference of the Association of American Geographers last month in Chicago. One of the papers that aroused more than the usual interest was read by Dr. Stephen S. Visher of Northwestern University, and this because he showed that a man's social stature in the community, his economic status and professional reputation may be indirect results of the geographical situation of the town in which he was born.

Visher based his conclusions on a detailed study of leading Americans born and reared in Indiana. Out of the study came unmistakable evidence that more notables were born in some sections of the state than in others.

Visher's survey included educational administrators, authors, artists, engineers and business men. "One large section of the state with a population of about 200,000 yielded only one outstanding scientist, whereas another with no more population yielded twenty," Visher declared. It turned out that men of distinction often came from the same area, whereas the less distinguished came partly from scattered areas. Visher questioned Indiana's notables listed in "Who's Who in America" and "American Men of Science" in making his study.

Why should the outstanding scientists and leaders in the arts be so unevenly distributed in Indiana? Visher finds that "the physical or geographic environment influences . . . often affect indirectly the geographic yield of leaders by concentrating certain types of people rather than directly by affecting diet, occupation, health and energy."

The parts of Indiana that have the longest and hottest summers yielded fewer notables than the coolest, but the most productive part of the state was not the coolest. Much of Indiana's nearly level land has not produced leaders; but the prosperous areas, usually the most hilly, have.

In the blue grass regions of Kentucky and Tennessee there is a relation between wealth and leadership. This is not true of Indiana, Visher finds. Large sections of relatively rich and prosperous land have yielded few leaders in Indiana. More leaders came from towns than from farms in Indiana, and small

Continued on page 50

# Literary Appraisals

**THE FLORIDA OF THE INCA. A History of Hernando De Soto.** By Garcilaso de la Vega Translated from the Spanish and edited by John Greer Varner and Jeannette Johnson Varner. 665 pp. Austin: University of Texas Press.

**H**ERNANDO De SOTO was a Spanish officer who made a fortune in the conquest of Peru. Home again in Spain he was unable to content himself there, and applied to Charles V for a commission to colonize the vast territory then called Florida, which was granted to him. In 1537 a fateful man called Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca returned to Spain after fantastic ordeals and heroisms as a survivor of the Narváez expedition, which had made the last previous attempt to settle Florida and ended in disaster. Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca had much to tell, and in consequence enrollments for De Soto's Florida venture increased.

In June of 1539, De Soto landed in Florida with almost 1,000 people and 300 horses. Four years later, he received burial in the Mississippi. Fewer than 250 men—and no horses—survived him as his expedition, in crudely improvised ships, sailed across the Gulf to bitter haven in Mexico.

"Florida" designated a tremendous kingdom embracing all that stretched from the Atlantic to the present Rio Grande, and from the Gulf of Mexico north to terra incognita fading into the thirty-fifth parallel. De Soto's army covered an astounding amount of this territory, looking for fair lands, harbors, docile native people, glory, gold, silver and pearls. Some of these things they found, though gold and silver reported by Indians turned out to be copper and pyrites. Glory vanished in hardship, and finally, dissension. However, great endurance and deeds were surviving treasures for the soul that marched with De Soto, and this book is their richest storehouse.

Garcilaso de la Vega, the author, was born in Peru of a Spanish father and a royal mother in 1539, the year that saw the North American start of De Soto's wandering dream. Proud of his mixed ancestry, our historian referred to himself as The Inca, and also cultivated the fruits of his Spanish heritage as a man of learning. The story of De Soto's thousand and their march obsessed The Inca and he gave to it more than thirty years of his life.

Other contemporary narratives of De Soto's entrada have been available, notably that by the Hidalgo of Elvas, which was published in 1557, well before The Inca's. However, where one reads like a synopsis the other pours forth detail, nuance, color and high feeling for both the follies and glories of human beings. The Inca is a literary artist who makes us see; and even though he was not there in Florida he creates the very flavor of the experience. The immense physical energy of strife comes right off his battle pages.

In all the violence and change and strangeness of the adventure we see the intimacies of human nature in both Indian and Spaniard. We witness prodigies and we puzzle (like his soldiers) over the curious deterioration of De Soto's judgment. We see a pristine America. We hear the whole convention of Spanish chivalry in the fustian grandeurs put into the mouths of Indian chiefs by the author, and, the heirs of Cervantes as The Inca was not; we know the pathos of changing style imposed over constancy of

heart. And filled to the eyes with The Inca's visions, we do not wonder at his bitterness when he says:

"Nowadays, however, the conquerors of that world are ridiculed by those people who have not seen it; for partaking of its fruits as they do without having undergone the pain and labor of the men who won it, such people think that it was gained with the same ease with which they are now enjoying it."

Still, but for such a book as his, which is both symbol and fulfillment of the art of history, great deeds would be forgotten and their living consequences taken for granted.

The translation by Mr. and Mrs. Varner could hardly be more readable, even while it reflects much learning in the materials, aims and conventions of the Spanish Golden Age. The introductory matter, notes and index are all excellent. Aside from a few misprinted dates, perhaps the only unfortunate feature of the volume as a whole is the publisher's claim on the jacket which calls it "The first great classic of American history." The "Florida" was first published in 1605. It deserves to be called a classic. But the first? When the "Relacion" of Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, describing great kingdoms of our southwestern lands and peoples, appeared in 1542?

P. H.

**A WANDERER IN INCA LAND,** by Christopher Sandeman. New York, Scribner's, 1949. 192 p

**W**ITH GOOD TASTE and sound knowledge of the country's history and geography, Christopher Sandeman has given us one of the best advertisements of Peru in his "A Wanderer in Inca Land," an interpretation based on 89 artistic photographs. Everything in it is shown sharply and truthfully. The cities, the people and their daily activities, the flora and fauna of the various regions parade before us in pleasing variety, thanks to the efforts of this British botanist who is also a magnificent photographer and a man of sensitivity.

Lima, pompous and lordly, opens the door to Peru's cities, revealing the Spanish tradition of the colonial period: in front of the old Cathedral that guards his dry bones, the statue of Marquis Pizarro presents him clad in mail, with sword in hand; the house of the Torre Tagle family displays paneling and ornaments from the Peninsula, with Moorish touches in tile and latticework; La Pericholi's villa is entwined with extravagant baroque stairways that remind us of her love affair with the Viceroy Manuel de Amat; the stark white Government Palace provides a vivid contrast for the red uniforms of the presidential guard.

Serene and megalithic Cuzco, with its Inca atmosphere and the coppery timelessness of the indigenous race, dominates the book. Sandeman could not escape towers, and cloister (Santa Ana, Santo Domingo, La Compañía), the Quechua note prevails in his pages: the sacred rock of Kencoc or Quenco, the little stone streets separating the palaces of the various Incas, the temple of three windows, the astronomical stone, the terrifying gorge, the palaces and labyrinths of Machu Picchu, which seems like a city hanging from the clouds.

Arequipa, placid to behold yet agitated in tempo, represents the mestizo city. Like Sandeman's beautiful picture of Misti Volcano, it is white outside and burning within, as complex as the Churrigueresque door of San Martín Church and as simple as the pastoral landscapes of its countryside, also recorded here.



In his presentation of Peruvians, Sandeman has gone deep and avoided the picturesque. Happily, he does not show us those señoritas with Spanish comb and mantilla, so ubiquitous in books of this sort. Instead, in beautiful studies of heads and effective group scenes, he introduces us to the Indian and mestizo people. Here are the Quechuas of royal blood and the descendants of slaves in their showy chuello caps, the ladies in lliella shawls, the servant girls in their ponchos; the somber Huanca women resting in the street; the farmers who break the ground with the traditional taella plow of their ancestors; the Campas of the long tunics and sure arrows; the muscular Jeberos of the North, with their heavy loads; and the Chamas, who are the best potters of the Ucayali Valley. Here too are the mestizo children with mischievous smiles in their Mongoloid eyes; the cock fighters the skillful hat-weavers of Celendín. Sandeman mixes all these characters in those picturesque periodic meetings, full of color, flavor, and aroma, called fairs; the book's jacket and five other photographs depict the markets of Huánuco, Huancayo, Pisac, and so on.

Attempting to explain Peru's tortured geography, Sandeman points out the variety of the landscape and its violent transitions. But we would have noted this characteristic in the photographs themselves, for he wisely selected scenes to represent best those microcosms, those water-tight compartments that were formed between or behind the Andes.


The dry wasteland of the coast appears in three views of the sands near Huacho, the thirsty plants of Churín, and the giddy tumult of the Oyón River. The yunga zone is seen in another river—the Rimac below Matucana—and in the strong and strange growths of cactus that are like vegetable dromedaries. The suni region is presented in the cut of a stream, wrinkled in one place and stormy in another. The author devotes more than twenty pictures to the tranquility and strength of the Quechua land, showing it in varied aspects: haughty and dominating in two-headed Huascarán, that reaches up past 22,000 feet in snow that never melts; pastoral and bucolic in the Tarma Val-

ley, like an Italian primitive painting; agricultural and mestizo in the cities of the Huaylas corridor pressed between the Black and White Cordilleras—Yungay, Caraz, Chancos; or lingering in the Spanish seventeenth century, like Ayacucho. There are two representative shots of the vast, cold tableland, with its fields of tall grass and its winds, its solitary lakes and ibises. One shows the empty lands near Lake Salinas and the other a family of llamas.


Passing over the peaks, Sandeman starts to descend the eastern ramparts of the Andes. Now his camera pauses in transitional zones to capture a street in Lamas, a path in Moyobamba, a town and a river in Huánuco, the flora of Carpis and the barefoot "patacalas" women of Chachapoyas, still with the mountain shawl on their shoulders, but erect like the women of Loreto from carrying large pate bowls and water jugs on their heads.

Then he enters upon the fascinating jungle life. In more than fifteen pictures we see the destructive work of the great rivers, the huts of the interior, the Ganso Azul oil zone, the foggy "London" of Carpis, the changing channels and the lowlands, the colorful flowers and wild animals.

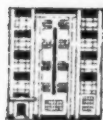
Sandeman has made a book that Peru can thank him for. It is a volume that anyone who wants to



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F. R.

**THE BROKEN ROOT.** By Arturo Barera. Translated from the Spanish by Ilsa Barera. 307 pp. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co.

THE Spanish crisis, so far as human experience is concerned, is little known. Franco's Spain has inspired no novel in the years that it has been offering itself to satire. Why have the novelists avoided the theme? Because of moral repugnance? Reading Arturo Barera's book one understands that it is possible.

"The Broken Root" deals with a modest Spanish bank clerk, a refugee in London, who returns to Madrid after ten years. He risks that adventure for practical and sentimental reasons (his first wife and three children are there), trusting that his passport as a British subject will make him safe from fascist reprisals. He also has the desire to face the difficult experience of so many exiles: to return to the places of his youth. And he returns with his eyes prematurely old and somewhat disconcerted.

As may be supposed, the experience is desolating. His family is in the last stage of a process of disintegration that presents all the examples of physical, moral and mental misery. Among these ruins there are only madmen and fools. And they all conspire against the modest savings that the clerk has in London. This conspiracy at times recalls the tragi-comic humor of the Russian writers of the last century. In the rivalry to get hold of those savings the Falangist denounces his brother—a naive idealist trapped by the Communists—who is murdered.

Neither the family nor the country are what they used to be to the hero. The disillusionment is painful but the exile has had so many in his life that he is not surprised and hardly complains. He realizes that his conscience has matured in contact with a liberal



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culture while his family has been degenerating in the atmosphere of objection. That is all and it is enough to create a dramatic tension which covers up the trivial in the way the author chooses such and such a fact with allegorical intention. The best quality in the book is its simplicity and absence of sophistication. Facing the horror of the facts the narrative has a soothing and calming innocence which makes the argument more persuasive. The fusion of the autobiographical with the imaginary raises problems which Barea solves decorously.

In the narrative rather than in the description—and in the realistic plasticity of the dialogue—the novel occasionally maintains the vigor of "The Forging of a Rebel," a previous book by Barea. I prefer and it deserves more consideration than that of the other works of the author, but "The Broken Root" is the first about living conditions in the Spain of today and it deserves more consideration than that of the simple priority in time. I am sure that Americans will agree.

R. S.

**THIS IS SPAIN** By Richard Pattee. Introduction by Joseph Husslein, S. J. Science and Culture Series. 534 pp. Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company.

IN fairness to all concerned, two things have to be made clear at the beginning: the writer of this book is completely pro-Franco; the writer of this review is anti-Franco. The problem of reviewing books about contemporary Spain is a knotty one for editors and critics alike. It almost seems as if two different reviewers should be chosen, one pro and one anti. Then the prospective reader, being completely confused, can divide by two and throw in the wastebasket.

Mr. Pattee deserves justice in the favorable as

# XX

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well as the unfavorable sense. He has put an immense amount of hard, earnest work in every corner of Spain and a great deal of documentary research into this book. He is acute, sympathetic, scholarly, with a deep understanding of Spain and the Spanish people, and his book certainly deserves a reading, whatever one feels. Perhaps it should especially be read by the anti-Francoists, who ought to be made to rethink and restudy the bases of their opinions in the light of this able and up-to-date defense of Franco, his regime and the interests that paved the way for his ascension and that support him now.

In my opinion, many pertinent facts damaging to the Nationalists are left out, many disputable theses are put forward as facts, and there are many mistakes. There is much that can be said against the Republicans and the activities of their followers. A factual account that confined itself to blunders, atrocities and excesses would be damaging indeed—and could remain factual and therefore have a solid historic value. Yet to throw in facts, rumors, gossip and opinions and call the result a history is not helpful. It is less so when the blunders, atrocities and excesses of the Nationalists are glossed over or ignored. Moreover, it will always be an unmitigated pity that the Spanish problem should become so bedeviled and distorted by religion.

Mr. Pattee is to be read as an advocate, either the devil's or on the side of the angels, according to one's point of view.

H. L. M.

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# Current Attractions

## OPERA SEASON

By Vane C. Dalton

**T**HE annual season of the Opera Nacional will open on the 23rd of this month, and extending through June and July will consist of ten plays, each to be performed twice. The season's repertoire will include the following works: "Andrea Chenier," "Madame Butterfly," "Mephistopheles," "Manon Lescaut," "Adrienne Lecouvreur," "Werther," "Aida," "La Traviata," and "Rigoletto." Of these, "Adrienne Lecouvreur" by Cilea is the only play that will be given its initial presentation in Mexico.

As regards the cast, the Opera Nacional announces the return engagement of various artists who have performed here in former seasons, among whom are the soprano Maria Meneghini Callas, the baritone Robert Weede and the basso Cesare Siepi. Clara Petrella, soprano, Mario del Monaco, Cesare Valetti and Glauco Searlini, tenors, and Giuseppe Taddei, baritone, have been contracted in Italy and will make their local debut during the forthcoming season.

The musical direction will be entrusted to Giuseppe Antonicelli and Oliverio da Fabritis, while Armando Agnini will be in charge of the stage direction as in former years.

It has been also announced that the National Institute of Fine Arts will collaborate with the Opera Nacional in the presentation of the forthcoming season. While the full extent of this collaboration has not been specified, it is understood that the Opera Nacional will have the privilege to utilize the Palacio de Bellas Artes for its rehearsals and that it will have at its disposal the chorus and the orchestra of the National Institute. This obviously necessary collaboration should contribute very much to the success of the season.

## SYMPHONY

If we are to judge from the quantity and quality of musical attractions available to the public of this city during recent weeks it will seem as if we were in the midst of a veritable musical revival. Two symphony orchestras—an unprecedented occurrence—have been offering simultaneous seasons of concerts, while various eminent soloists have been performing here with orchestras or in recitals, and the fact that all these attractions have drawn a large attendance is truly significant.

The return of Carlos Chavez to the podium as guest conductor (the term "guest" has in this instance indeed a strange sound) of the National Symphony Orchestra during the brief twelve-concert season brought forth a most enthusiastic public response and has placed this orchestra, at least during this season, in the position formerly held by the Mexican Symphony Orchestra which he disbanded in 1949. This season indisputably revealed that this orchestra can perform exceedingly well under proper direction. Each of the six programs was rendered in a more than adequate manner, with the closing program in my opinion reaching the highest measure of excellence.

Carlos Chavez opened this program with his own composition, the saraband for a string orchestra extracted from his ballet "The Daughter of Colquide," which he wrote for Martha Graham. This dance, limpid and poised, as regards orchestral presentation, is the most suitable part of this ballet, and under the direction of its author it was performed with high distinction and beauty. Following this, the great violinist Nathan Milstein interpreted Beethoven's matchless concerto for a violin and orchestra. On this occasion Chavez achieved what I believe is the finest form of concerto rendition, insofar as the orchestra did not merely accompany the soloist but engaged him throughout in a spirited dialogue. And as to Milstein, he gave us a version which was very personal, very emotive and full of virtuosity.

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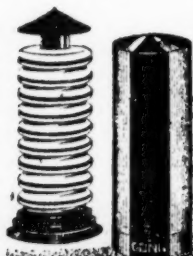
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In the second part of the program we had the opportunity to enjoy once more the two splendid compositions which have rewarded Chavez with such abundant applause in the past—Debussy's *Prelude to the Faun's Dream* and the second suite from Ravel's ballet *"Daphnis and Chloe."*

The presentation of Leonard Bernstein in the threefold role of guest conductor, piano soloist and composer, comprised the principal attraction of the season's fifth program. This young and extraordinary musician truly fascinated his audience with his dynamic personality and versatile gifts. His interpretation of Chavez's *"Sinfonia India"* was marked by a peculiar freshness and spontaneity; it seemed almost uncanny how a non-Mexican could grasp by pure intuition the authentic essence of this thoroughly Mexican composition and give it such an enthralling and truthful expression.

Bernstein, like Iturbi and Bruno Walter, is one of the counted few pianists who can successfully conduct an orchestra while performing as soloist. Performing thus in Beethoven's *Concerto Number 1*, he demonstrated his singular talent, rendering a beautiful solo and guiding the orchestra through a smooth and eloquent performance with almost nothing more than the indications inherent in his own playing.

As notable as he is in the role of conductor and pianist, Bernstein is even more notable as composer. His symphony *"Jeremiah,"* inspired by the lamentations and judgments of the great Jewish prophet, is a work original of concept and structure, and of great narrative force. It is profoundly imbued with the ancient cultural tradition of a great and tragic people, its musical idiom springing from the august language wherewith Jehova dictated the Ten Commandments to Moses and Solomon composed his *Song of Songs*.

The appearance of Leonard Bernstein in Mexico was in every respect an outstanding musical event, which contributed a very important share to the conspicuous success of the National Symphony Orchestra's season.

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## Art and Personal Notes

**P** AINTINGS drawings and lithographs by Rail Anguiano comprise the current exhibit at the Salon de la Plastica Mexicana (Calle de Pugle No. 154). Titled "Los Lacandones de Bonampak," this exhibit presents the artist's impressions of a recent journey through the lesser known regions of Chiapas. Depicting the Lacandon Indians in their secluded habitat, the works of Anguiano have a documentary as well as artistic value.

**T** HE excellent tempera painting, "Lily Vender," reproduced on the cover of this magazine, is by the distinguished American artist Roy MacNicol who resided in Mexico over a period of six years. He painted prolifically during his local sojourn and his Mexican paintings form part of many distinguished collections in America and Europe. Having recently returned to Mexico, accompanied by Mrs. MacNicol, the artist intends to establish his permanent studio in the environs of this city.

**W** E reproduced the following note from the April issue of "Picture son Exhibit":

"Bejar Chano, after a jaunt across Europe, returned to his native Mexico to paint the Mexican themes just shown at the Ward Eggleston Galleries. This young artist, with no formal training behind him but with enormous gusto for painting, seems to have acquired the discipline in the handling of color which was missing in his earlier work. For one thing, he has learned how to paint in a low key, thereby varying his mood and range of his themes. 'Mujeres,' a study of three women, captures the spirit of the silent Indian people. 'Danzantes' is a lively still life of

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Black-eyed Susans. And the fiestas are exultantly gay in the thick impasto paint this artist prefers."

THE ROMANO Gallery (José María Marroqui No. 5) is offering during the course of this month its fourth annual contest exhibition under the designation of "Salon de Primavera." The catalogue indicates that two winners of this contest will be awarded medals, one commemorating Saturnino Herrán and the other José Clemente Orozco.

While the show has volume and variety, only a few of the works reveal a more than average degree of merit. Of these few the canvases by Pilar Calvo, José Marquez, Leopoldo Estrada and Leon Koppelman deserve special mention.

SALONCITO is the name of a new exhibit gallery at Calle de Coahuila No. 223, which opened its doors this month with an exhibit of works by three gifted American art students—Thea Ramsay, Robert Ray and Paul Hopke. Thea Ramsay exhibits a very interesting group of etchings, drypoints and aquatints; Robert Ray presents eleven paintings in oil and other mediums; while Paul Hopke offers abstract sculptures fashioned from colored wire.

THE Galeria de Arte Mexicano (Calle de Milan 18) is presenting at this time a group of paintings by Lloyd Lozes Goff. Mr. Goff is an American artist who is temporarily residing and working in Mexico.

MISCELLANEOUS paintings, silk screen prints and Mexican retablos comprise the current exhibit at the Galeria Reger (Calle de Lisboa No. 60).

DURING the course of the foregone month Galeria Arte Moderno (Plaza Santos Degollado 16-C) showed an outstanding group of landscapes in a collective exhibition titled "El Paisaje Mexicano." Guerrero Galván, Francisco Disamantes, Rodolfo Segovia, Raúl Anguiano, Reyes Meza, Ricardo Martínez, Mariano Paredes, Gonzalez Serrano, Juan Soriano,

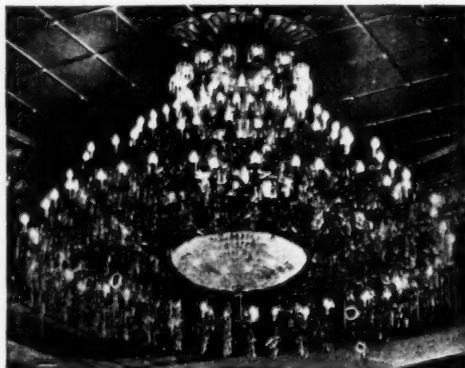
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Chavez Morado, and Gonzalez Camarena contributed one more works to this quite impressive projection.

### Gloria of Taxco . . .

Continued from page 24

Since then she has added "Sweetie Pie" and other more or less useless salutations to her vocabulary, while with her head pressed against yours in the darkness she can give back whole sentences like a sounding board. Her voice is high in the scale and travels light as a moth's wings, but each note is rounded and complete. When she laughs it is never sustained, little more than a chuckle, a bubble or two caught in her throat like a bird in a cage. Occasionally she sings, just a whisper of a tune, muted but true like a postage stamp edition of a classic.

One night she danced in the thick darkness of the verandah and to all the other fleeting and exquisite sounds you associate with Gloria you add the flutter and beat of her shoes on the stone floor. The music box in the valley had taken up its burden a little earlier than usual and the sultry song came up the slope purified, plaintive and full of yearning. Gloria caught the rhythm from where she stood at the kitchen door. At first she held one position, tapping, hopping, skipping out the music. As the song became more intricate she introduced new and broken steps in the pattern of sound. And then, loveliest of all, she advanced down her stage as if to reward her audience with outstretched arms. In the total darkness, her body obscured and her smile erased, the passage of her feet was like the tremulous whirr of a bat's wings, when for a few moments it forsakes the tree-tops for the alien pavements.

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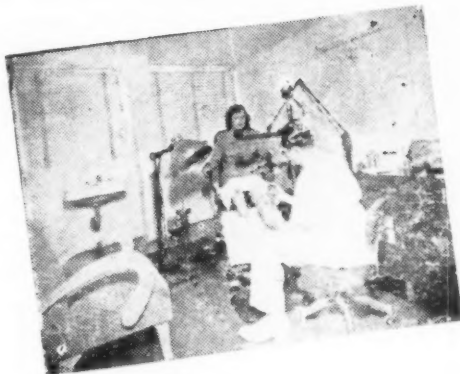
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**Patterns of an Old City . . .**

Continued from page 18

power to defer this limit, to alter and rectify the fatal disintegrating course.

Life at home became unbearably harsh for Gutierrez, and he found slight solace in his daily task at the store. He grew convinced that even with an occasional raise his job would never vouchsafe a decent and peaceful existence and that improvement could be achieved only by undertaking some drastic change. From a clerk in a store to a traveling salesman seemed a logical step of advancement; and though it required a supreme effort to overcome his misgivings and doubts, he undertook this crucial step. Life on the road at least extended the promise of independence, the opportunity to exercise his own impeded initiative, as well as a partial escape from the unhappy environment at home. It would enable a man who at the age of forty had failed to achieve a satisfactory existence to seek his way out, to start afresh. Indeed, he might yet convince his wife that she was wrong, that he was not devoid of ambition, that he was not lacking in courage and ability to face new hazards, to confront new hardships, and to fight his way out. And this determination made him pathetically aware that he yet preserved a spark of love for the strange woman who was his wife—the woman whom he married so many years before, overflowing with hope and illusion and ardent love, which time had slowly, implacably reduced to mere affection, to a threadbare habit of unrewarding companionship, and finally to hostile tolerance. But this realization was always followed by an afterthought that the love he guarded for her was kept alive solely by his love and devotion for their children. She was their mother; they needed her; they shared their love impartially between the two, and this in turn made him share his own love between them all. No man is too poor to possess something; no man can be reduced to the state of utter penury so long as he is alive. He yet has something which he might call his own; and despite his material want he yet had them. His wife and his three daughters were his estate. It was a precarious estate, a perilous possession, which he could retain only so long as he was worthy of it.

It was, to be sure, in order to make himself worthy of it that Gutierrez decided to try his luck and test his courage on the road. He knew that thereby he made his final gamble, that he staked everything on his chance of success, that he was burning his bridges, severing himself from his past and closing any possible way to retreat. And knowing this, knowing that he was actually driven by despair, by an imperative

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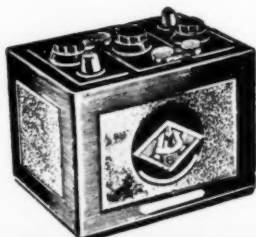
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need to succeed, he could not envisage the possibility of failure. No man, he reasoned, was born with experience; life was an endless school, and necessity taught men how to defend themselves. Life had been cruel, but the world was not a hostile realm. A man had to begin by saying yes to himself before he could elicit this reply from others.

And yet he soon discovered that negation rather than acceptance was the rule; that most men said no because in their innate defensiveness yes defined capitulation which they instinctively sought to avoid, even when it was desirable and profitable for them. He learned that there was a strange tendency in all people to reject or defer any action which was not entirely of their own volition, or which was induced by the persuasion of others. There was this completely irrational element in the perfectly rational business of buying and selling. Conscious of their ultimate goal, men perversely complicate the course which leads to it; they deliberately handicap their progress by creating obstructions. They seek the hard, the roundabout way instead of the straight and shortest line.

At the beginning Gutierrez blamed his failure on certain factors beyond his control—on wrong territory or line, on generally adverse conditions, or on the intangible, inexplicable opposition inherent in human nature. But after a time he became convinced that he alone was responsible for his failure, and in having reached this conviction he came to accept his failure as a perfectly normal condition and his occasional meager success as an exception from rule. For like success, failure too has a way of repeating itself, of becoming a habit.

And in having acquired this habit he lost the will to turn back, to start anew. But then, there was, in fact, no way of turning back. Now he could only continue his plodding; now, in his perpetual discouragement, he could only strive to preserve sufficient hardihood and courage to continue his thankless task. After all, it all sums up to a law of average—the positive and negative balance. So many failures against so much success. But if in the end the sum of failure by far outweighs the sum of success—then what? Well, you just carry on. You go on performing automati-

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cally. You plod along trying not to think too much about it. "... Good morning, señor Sanchez. How are you, señor Sanchez? I hope you are feeling well. It is a very nice morning, señor Sanchez, and I hope you are feeling well. For I bring you something very special, something you badly need, something very special and wonderful which will make you lots of money... How was that, señor Sanchez? You already have it on hand. You have too much of it? You say no, señor Sanchez? Not this time? Are you sure that you want to say no? Very well, señor Sanchez. Then it is no..."

At the outset he returned home each fortnight. Then it would be every three weeks, and finally he stayed away five or six weeks at a time. He found no relief from the homelessness, from the solitude and heartbreak of the road during his brief visits, and even in the abiding affection of his children he sensed an unspoken reproach, a lacerating reminder of his ingratitude and failure, which deepened the contempt and odium he harbored for himself. Resignedly he accepted his lot, and like a cripple who resignedly accepts the irretrievable loss of a limb, he came to regard his homelessness, his severance from kith and kin, as an irreparable condition. The road was now his only home. A solitary voyager, plying a route devoid of departures or returns, he went from place to place talking to people without ever getting close to them—a perpetual stranger in a strange midst, an alien in his own native land, a wanderer from no place into no where. His reality became reduced to dingy hotel rooms, unsavoury food, to incessant weariness from too much talk, from too much travel, from too much waiting in dismal bus or railway stations, and to occasional attempts at forgetfulness in some sordid cantina or with a woman he bought at the wayside. He found no relief from this reality during his infrequent journeys home, and there were times when he realized that the day would eventually come when these futile journeys would come to an end.

\* \* \*

It was Chita who usually resumed the saga of "Las Gorditas," though it was Mela who presently took over and carried on with the unwinding plot. She was nearly fourteen, and much too old for such childish games, but Tita and Chita were only six and eight, and with mama so seldom home in the afternoons, and of late some times absent through the nights, the task of looking after her little sisters rested on her shoulders. The saga was coached in terms of fantasy, of childish make-believe, but its warp and woof was spun of stern truth. It enabled Mela to communicate to her sisters by means of fanciful parables the grim

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facts, the grave problems and the painful secrets which burdened her mind, and to lessen her burden by inventing felicitous solutions.

They were seated as always near the little monument on scraps of newspapers spread over the scraggly grass—a tiny isolated group amid the afternoon throng, immersed in their own chimerical world, a world whose genesis evolved from the squat effigies in stone which grew animate and acquired the semblance of reality through a fanciful representation of themselves. The sculptured tableau consisted of a woman and three children, one of whom was a boy, whose role in their improvised play was always carried out by Chita.

"We are all there," Chita said pointing at the monument, "only I am the boy Miguelito, and their papa is always away. But their mama is always with them, not like our mama who is nearly always away from home. Their papa is away on the road. He is traveling all the time and some times when he comes home he brings them nice presents, lots of dulees and things, and he is happy because business was good... But usually he is sad because business is bad, and this makes them all sad and makes their mama ill-tempered."

Thus Chita usually began the visionary narrative whereto all three digressively contributed their share, leading up to the proper moment when Mela continued alone, enlivening it, to the fascination of her sisters, with necessary touches of mystery and suspense, lending it veritable substance and a feasible course and termination. The plot always involved a conflict between good and evil, between a hero and a villain, and the hero of course always triumphed in the end. Eventually, papa ran into a territory replete with eager buyers, or he won a lottery, or discovered a gold mine, or found a buried treasure somewhere along his mysterious route, and the Gorditas moved out of the damp and crowded little flat into a beautiful big house with a lovely garden, and had many new dresses, and were driven to school by a chauffeur in a shiny big automobile...

Today, however, Mela seemed unable to evolve a course that would lead to a happy ending. Somehow, involuntarily, she introduced a new kind of villain, an evil force, a dreadful menace, which the hero was unable to surmount. It was something which for some time had secretly gnawed at her heart, a thing she had hitherto guarded from the ears of her little sisters, something she had desperately tried to deny to herself, to delete from her thoughts. This new and invincible villain, this frightful and forbidding thing, was named divorce.

The moment she uttered this dreadful word she wished she could erase it, skip it and turn the story away from it to a different tangent. But Tita, sensing its implicit frightfulness, looked at her wide-eyed and repeated the word in a fearful, trembling voice, "Divorce?... Their papa will never come home any more because their mama is going to get a divorce!... Their mama doesn't love him any more? And what is a divorce?"

Mela wanted to stop, to abruptly switch the course of the story; but now that the sinister word had been uttered she could not hold it back. The suppressed and terrifying truth burst forth as through an open floodgate. The dark secret emerged in a current like blood gushing out of a wound. "Yes," she said, "The Gorditas will soon be left without their papa because of this divorce their mama is going to get from a judge. She doesn't want papa any more. She doesn't need him. She goes out with other men, and they give her money with which she buys the perfume and the nice dresses she always hides when their papa comes home. That is why she always goes out in the afternoons and stays out so late in the night and does not get up till noon, and so often has sick headaches from drinking too much liquor. And now she is going to get the divorce, because that señor Palma, the man who some times comes to their house, is a Licenciado and he is getting it fixed up. She has already signed the papers, and señor Palma has taken them to the judge, and now, when the judge signs the papers too, that will be the divorce... And after that their papa will never come home any more."

Almost in unison Tita and Chita echoed her words: "He will never come home any more? Never?"

"Yes," Mela said. "He will just go on traveling without ever coming home... And maybe their mama will go away after a while too... maybe she'll go away with one of these men and never return... and the three gorditas will be left standing by themselves in this plaza."

She pronounced the final words slowly, in a hollow voice, as if talking aloud to herself, with her gaze fixed on the whirling wheels of the cars that sped along the street. Then, suddenly, as she perceived as if through a mist a gnarled hand resting over the mutilated bark of the ancient tree and the face of an old woman staring at them with an expression of mingled pity and surprise, she grew aware that all three of them were weeping, and in deep mortification she hastily brushed the tears off her cheeks and rose to her feet. "Come, children," she said. "It is time to go home." And firmly clasping her sisters' little hands she led them through the rushing traffic across the street.

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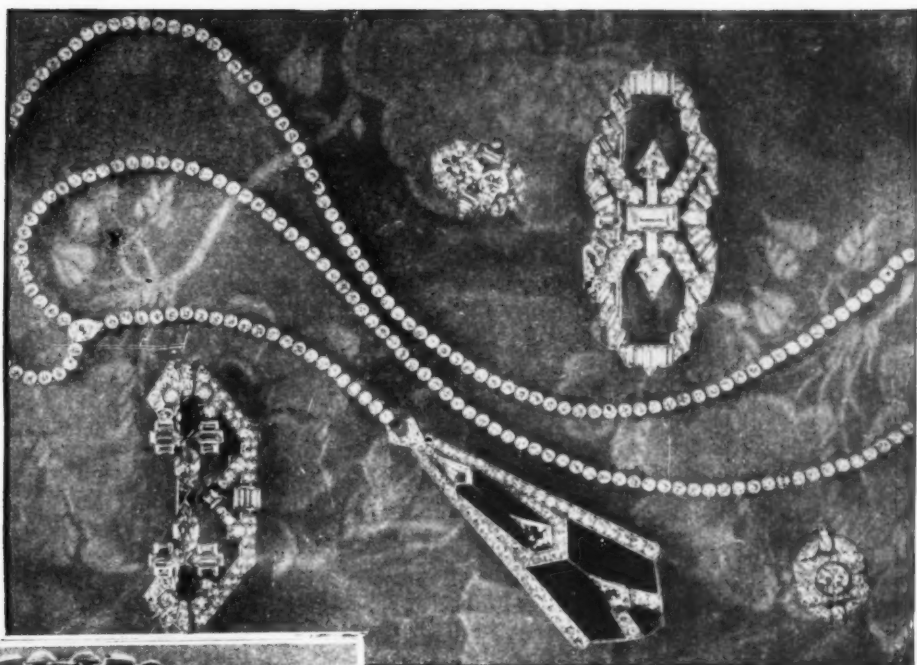


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## The Patio on the City . . .

Continued from page 23

which poured down the gutters; but on the day that I had scheduled to leave the sun did come out, brilliantly, and the pastel colors of the houses and the brighter colors of the profusion of flowers made it hard to depart. Jalapa has no great architectural monuments; it does not need them; enough that it lives up to its reputation of being the "Flower Garden of Mexico."

A drive of 75 miles and a further descent of 4,000 feet brings one to the old port where Cortés first landed in New Spain. Vera Cruz has been wholeheartedly damned by many a traveler who has arrived there in sweltering heat, or who has been unfortunate enough to have experienced a "norther"; and the popular procedure for those arriving by boat seems to be to get out as quickly as possible. Actually, the ancient Spanish port has a romance and a subtle charm, with its old-world plaza, its blend of the old and the new, and its quaint houses with painted wood balconies, that is not immediately obvious. Inviting portales with open-air cafes face the plaza and the weather-worn parochial church; the facade of the City Hall has a fine and rather rare double portico; and the rocky Fortress of San Juan de Ulua out in the harbor has much of the grimness of the Chateau d'If in the harbor of Marseilles, where the Count of Monte Cristo was imprisoned for so long.

The other branch of the road which forks some twenty-six miles east of Puebla leads to Orizaba, Fortín, and Córdoba. The drop into the valley where Orizaba is situated is the steepest in all Mexico—two thousand feet in four miles and another thousand in the next four. On a clear day the view of the mighty peak of Orizaba is magnificent and the view down into the valley is breath-taking; but in the dense fog that sometimes covers that abrupt drop careful maneuvering is necessary.

A long stretch of uninteresting textile centers leads into Orizaba; and beyond that busy semi-tropical city a further scenic drop into the lush vegetation of the tropics brings one to the gardens of Fortín and on to the lazy Andalusian city of Córdoba.

In spite of the constant drizzle to which, like Jalapa, it is likely to be subjected, and in spite of the mud of the market and the zopilotes which constitute the street-cleaning department, Córdoba, with its tropical gardens and its grass-grown streets tumbling down into the jungles beyond, has a great deal of drowsy appeal. Its somnolent plaza outlined by extremely tall palms has a more tropical feeling than the Paseo del Gran Capitán in the Spanish city of the

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same name, but the low, flat, whitewashed houses with Spanish-Moorish windows heavily barred by wrought iron grilles and the patios paved with tile and filled with flowers are quite reminiscent of the ancient Moorish capital by the sea. The sprawling Baroque parochial church faces one side of the plaza and its bells are busy at all hours. On another side are the inevitable portales, center of trade and gossip, and headquarters for the endless tournaments of dominoes; while behind these ancient Colonial buildings the streets drop into a tangle of jungle where the red tile roofs of the simple houses contrast strikingly with the deep, luxuriant green of the vegetation.

### Un Poco de Todo . . .

Continued from page 31

cities yielded more notables per capita than did the larger ones except in the category of men of greatest distinction.

A good many variables have to be considered in a study like this. Education, economic conditions, the preponderantly agricultural or industrial character of a community, the fact that both Kentucky and Tennessee still live up to Southern traditions whereas Indiana has none—all these factors probably have had something to do in the development of leadership.

### The Tourist's Mistake . . .

Continued from page 17

ñor," Jesús Rinaldo speaks up. "You understand about corporations, señor?"

"I own them!" the gringo explodes. "Where is this outfit?" He glares at us.

Luis is suddenly full of sorrow as he addresses the gringo. "You have a good question there, señor. Where is a corporation? I myself was just wondering the same thing."

"It's a legal entity, you fool!" the turista cries.

"Of course," I say with inspiration. "You must take up the matter of your trailer with this legal entity, señor."

"Is everybody here crazy?" shouts the gringo. "Get my stuff together and let me out of here! Or must I call the police?"

"I would not do that," Jesús Rinaldo says softly. "We are many witnesses to this thing."

While he is speaking, the gringo's wife has slipped from the car and is standing outside by the trailer where she can hear.

"It is not a thing to be angry about, señor," Luis Gonzales speaks sadly. "Yesterday you went off and



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left your property, señor, like so much salvage. It was fished from the street and now belongs to the corporation. It is a pity, señor, but that's the way it is."

"Damn your corporation!" says the gringo, but not so loud this time.

"Pardon me, señor," I speak up bravely, "but yesterday we have heard you say you were through. You were fed up. Everything was ended. When the señora waved to us, it was as much as to say 'Good-by forever!' to the trailer. My cousin and I waved back, and it was like, what you might say, a bargain."

"I really did mean it that way, George!" It is the señora who speaks now. "Really, I did!"

The gringo wipes his face as if he is squeezing out a sponge. "Will you keep out of this, Marie?"

"But you weren't going to come back, you know," the señora insists. "It was only when I said the police could trace the license and find us in Detroit, and write, and make you pay freight—"

"Will you please, dear, shut up?" the gringo says, and he is sweating like a man found guilty.

Because it is in my mind that my Rosita is a little like the good señora, I make a suggestion. "I vote that we give the turista one share of stock in the corporation."

I am seconded by Luis Gonzalez, who adds, "One share from the two held by Jesús Rinaldo."

"No!" cries Jesús Rinaldo.

"Bueno!" say the others.

"Carried!" says Luis. With a gentle movement, he takes one piece of paper from Jesús Rinaldo's shirt pocket. "Here you are, señor," he smiles. "You are now a stockholder in The Pico Street Transportation Company."

Since he is a beginner, we explain to him how we

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are organized. The gringo stares at the piece of funny paper. He is like a man with his first tortilla. Suddenly he begins to laugh.

"Lord, oh, Lord!" he cries. "Wait till I show this to my attorneys!" He takes a card from his billfold. "Marie," he says to the señora, "this is probably the best investment I ever made."

"You will not regret it, señor," I reply, taking the card. "We will send you every month your share of the profits from our operations."

"Señor President," the turista answers with a fine smile, "this share of stock will be more than enough. Keep my share of profits and plow it back into the corporation. Take it as a gift."

He is a generous man, this gringo. I thank him for all. In a little while, when we have said our names around, he and the fine señora take a last look at the trailer and slide off in the fat car with much laughter. As they go, it occurs to me that, in a way, as president, I am entitled to three pieces of profits in the corporation. A small thought, but a good one.

When Sam Hondo demands that somebody fork over one buck for fixing the tire, I pay him from my own pocket.

Luis Gonzalez sits with a worried look, staring at his piece of funny paper. "I still do not like this matter of owning things," he says sadly. "Someday I will forget and roll a cigarette with this thing."

"What would you rather have?" I ask carefully.

"A good friend," he answers. "One I can borrow sometimes. One who will remember me when I am gone."

"I am that friend," I answer soberly.

When he hands me the share of stock, much happiness shines in his eyes. "Now," he says, "I am a rich man, and can still go through the eye of the needle."

Rosita's father whispers me outside as he leaves. "Paco," he says, "you behaved well just now and with good sense. I am going to give my share of stock to Rosita, and may it bring happiness to you both." He is a good man, Señor Santee, and I say in my heart that someday soon I will be a good son to him.



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There is much talk in the shop now, but it adds up only to the fact that I will take boards and fix the trailer. When that is done, it will remain to be ironed out what I am to receive for my work before the profits.

When I tell Rosita, she is overjoyed. "Five shares of profits, and your salary already!" she cries. And then she advises a wise thing. "Take a long time to get the shine wagon ready," she whispers. "Do not move too fast. We can afford to wait a little longer."

My Rosita is as smart as she is beautiful. Before the week is out, Jesús Rinaldo has been cleaned at the laundry, playing poker, and I have bought his share of stock for ten dollars. José Gonzalez comes wanting a loan to buy a new lawn mower, and in the end sells me his share for ten dollars also. Señor La Paz, who has never had faith in his piece of paper from the start, is willing to sell for eight dollars. Still there are no profits and I let it be known that there are many delays arranging my city permit to do business. Rosita lends me a little, with the understanding it is only a loan to be paid back, and in a month I have picked up all the stock but two shares.

My cousin Manuel each day has become more stubborn, and will not part with his two shares for any amount I can offer. But he knows, too, that I can put off starting the business forever. He is only a small minority, and could be voted out of his treasurer job any time. Yet he counts on my great love for Rosita, and in the end he knows he will win.

It is true. A night comes when my Rosita and I decide we can wait no longer. And after all, I consider, Manuel is my cousin. Outside of business, I have much affection for him. So the day of our marriage is decided, and it is necessary for me to begin the bu-

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siness. Such work I have not known before, but it is like panning gold.

On the Saturday night of my first week, I sit down with Manuel at the table, and we face the problem of dividing his share after my labor and expenses. The counting is very hard because we are unhappy. He looks at me a long time and finally he smiles a slow, tight smile.

"It will not be necessary," he says. His eyes return to the money before us as if there were nothing more beautiful. Quickly he pushes me two pieces of funny paper across the table, and there is a hot cherry of fire on his cigar as he speaks around it.

"A little wedding present," he says, "from the stingiest hombre on earth."

In my heart I promise that my cousin Manuel will never want for good cigars I have told Rosita that she will embrace him too. At our table there will always be a place for him, and besides, he still has the chairs and awning.

There is but one thing that is not right, and I speak it to Rosita on the day of our marriage.

"I feel I have been hard in business with my friends," I confess. "I must find a way to make it up to them."

My Rosita is all smiles as she kisses me. "I will feed them my best cooking," she whispers, "and they will make the best baby sitters on all Pico Street. Mi alma, you will see."

## What's Behind Our Revolutions? . . .

Continued from page 14

at eighty, after he had founded in his middle age the New Kingdom of Granada, still led his armies, though he had to be carried on the backs of Indians because he no longer had the strength to mount a horse? Or for the fighting friar Don Bartolomé de las Casas, who crossed the ocean fourteen times, and at ninety still fought spiritual battles and wrote volumes in defense of his humanitarian principles?

During those thirty years the conquistadors explored rivers that are among the greatest in the world, the Amazon, the Orinoco, the Magdalena, the Plata, and a good part of the Mississippi. They discovered the Pacific Ocean. They founded the capital cities of Mexico, Panama, Guatemala, La Paz, Lima, Quito, Buenos Aires, Bogotá, Asunción del Paraguay, Santiago de Chile—some on the Atlantic, others on the Pacific, some at sea level, others at altitudes up to twelve thousand feet. They subdued native empires and savage tribes. They bore the image of Christ first across a nuncharted ocean and later through lands of a world several times greater than the one that fifteen centuries before had been traversed by the most ardent of Christ's apostles.

Even the cities traveled; they moved from one site to another; they were born and reborn. The kings issued grants to pacify adventurers, to reestablish families, to keep the genealogical trees uncontaminated, to maintain the prestige of white or blue blood. On the human side of the New World experiment, all that was of no avail. The soldiers rose against their captains, and with their wind-whipped banners of re-

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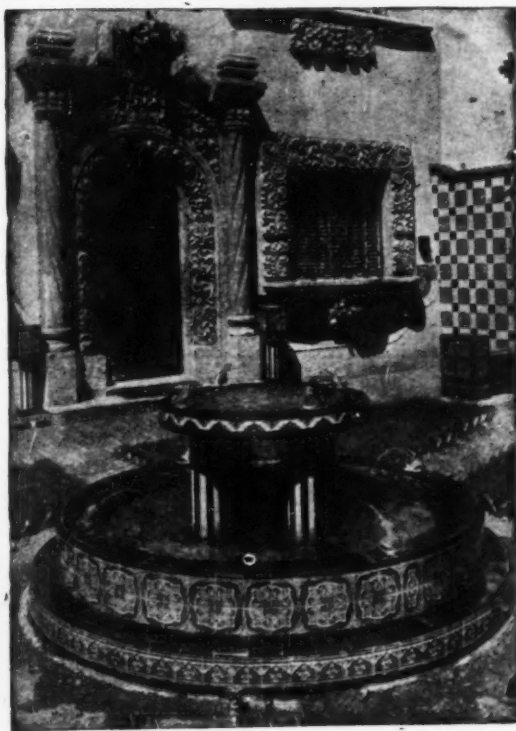
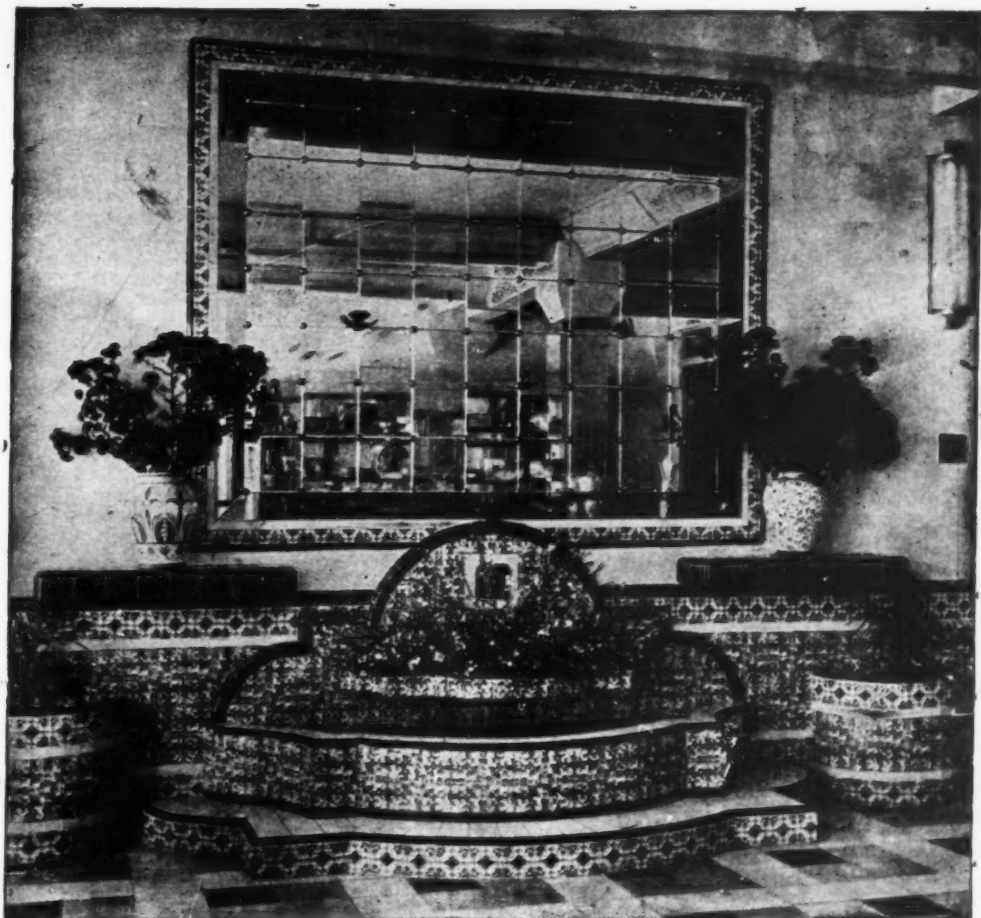
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bellion cried: "Long live the King!" The friars fought against the enslavement of the Indians, but the conquistadors divided them among themselves, and castes of servants and masters were formed.

The process was less violent in Brazil, and this was duly reflected in its history. Penetration into the interior was postponed until the eighteenth century, but from 1535, when Olinda was established, until the founding of Rio de Janeiro twenty years later, there was a series of conquests indicative of the destiny of the future colony. Portugal was more of a seafaring nation than Spain. The Portuguese took pleasure in founding ports. Bahia, Santos, Vitória, and Recife rose during those twenty years and there, too, the family and the social strata followed the same course as in the Spanish conquest.

By contrast, the master-servant set-up had little chance to develop in North America. The thirteen original colonies of the North had an all-white population, and there was a leveling into a single social category. Those who came as servants sold their services for a few years. Later, when their contracts were fulfilled and if they were still alive, they were considered the equals of the rest, had the same opportunities, became owners of the same lands. As a matter of fact, from the very first day, everyone seized his axe and cut wood, washed kettles, made beds, baited fishhooks, hunted wild animals. Equality was accentuated even more as the frontier moved west and the new settlers created their own fortunes.

In Spanish America, as in the southern United States—where political control was for a long time in the hands of Spaniards or Frenchmen—the social classes were gradually stratified. From the wealthy plantation owner or the commissionaire to the servant or the slave there was a rigid scale of distinctions, which later became an acute problem from the point of view of democracy.

Latin America suffered from the faults of the monarchical idea. The monarchy based everything on favor. The king graciously distributed lands and men, elevated protégés, bestowed titles, imposed taxes, put upon the humble the weight of daily labors. This formed habits of idleness and adulation, ideas of privilege, superiority complexes in certain families, which eventually cost time and bloodshed to abolish. In other European countries where the industrial revolution took place earlier, those mediaeval institutions were not so enduring as in sixteenth and seventeenth-century Spain. It is curious that much of what the Latin Americans are most bitterly censured for is a strictly European product. On the other hand the settlers of the thirteen North American colonies came from the Hanseatic League cities and from nations imbued with the mercantile, industrial spirit, the mid-



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dle-class spirit reacted against hierarchies of the nobility.

In our America to the south, those who succeeded in making their fortunes surrounded themselves with slaves, peons, servants. In today's Latin American speech there is an astonishing variety of colorful words to describe the precise status of those who do the work for the rest.

I was born in a middle-class family in Bogotá—a city where there were no Negro slaves because the climate is too cold for them—and I remember that there never were fewer than four servants in my house, as well as the many peons who cared for the animals and did the chores in the fields. The peons called my father "my master" and they greeted me as "my little master." The women called my mother, and still do, "your grace." My home was typical.

Thus when the countries of Spanish and Portuguese America became independent, many aspects of life had to be revolutionized before they could reach the democratic level that came so easily in the thirteen colonies of the North. To create democracy where there have been no differences in color or social position is child's play.

These minor matters have gradually disappeared in Europe as a result of wars or revolutions, but Latin America has had to face them since the wars of independence. In 1775 the United States fought a war of independence, and nothing more. The revolutionary aspects of that war were reduced to more definite expression of principles, for even the colonies had been quite free. In Latin America, once independence from Spain had been won with the victory at Ayacucho, the revolution continued. That revolution must transform our social customs to achieve the democratic level that is indeed the unswerving ideal of all our nations.

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### The Craftsmen of Tlaquepaque . . .

Continued from page 10

ginality was carefully guarded and he forbade the taking of photographs.

Señor Avalos was almost hauled into my presence one day by his fat little wife who managed the cash, and his pretty daughter, who made out all invoices. He was a shrinking swarthy man, perhaps sixty. He wore a blue shirt, striped trousers and an odd pair of American mail-order shoes, that seemed strange in Guadalajara, the shoe capital of Mexico. Two little Chihuahuas dogs never left his heels. All the while, he tried to run away from his captors and tormentor. But they held him fast, first in the ancient dusty showrooms with the high ceilings with hand-hewn beams and the plaster roughly laid on herringbone fashion. Then he was dragged out back to the kilns, where all the glass blowing was done by young boys, many of the assistants not over thirteen years of age. The capacity was obviously limited.

Mother and daughter lamented that each year they got farther and farther behind in trying to fill the ever-increasing orders. Señor Avalos smiled at this, as he was prodded into a little personal history, the little dogs sensing the coercion and barking in dismal sympathy. This was the fourth generation of the House of Avalos. He had been at it forty years, during which he alone had taught all apprentices.

Finally, we climbed a narrow spiral stair to an upper room, where he kept all his fantastic and often humorously original specimens from the gaze of those who might not appreciate them and would perhaps laugh. Then he slid off out of sight, taking his two yapping Chihuahuas with him.



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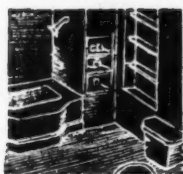
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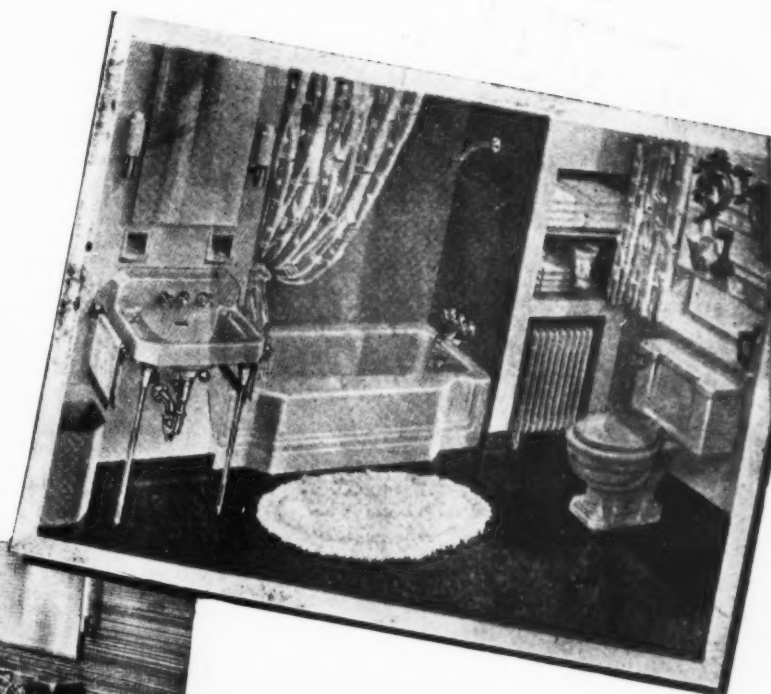


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## Chichén Itzá . . .

Continued from page 12

tene torch, attached to a porch pillar and supplemented by a lighted taper held by the tousleheaded eight-year-old son of the showman.

This youngster also played the double drums between acts and handled one of the puppets in the final number, a burlesque bullfight. When it came his time to work the strings, a smaller brother, aged six, was scheduled to take his place at the drums. But there was a halt in the procedure. The substitute had disappeared. The father, backstage, called his name in hoarse whispers. "Gonzalo!" The mother began to call aloud with anxiety, "Gonzalo! Gonzalo!" The audience grinned and began to take up the call: "Gonzalo, we want Gonzalo." Frogs croaked gutturally, as if calling Gonzalo. Men poked about the yard searching for the substitute drummer. And then he was discovered by one of the patrons, who rolled him out from a bundle of carpet like Cleopatra before Caesar, but semiclothed and scowling. He had only sneaked into the pile to take a nap. Now like a zombi he was set up on his stool and handed his drumsticks, and the show went on. Amid shouts of glee from the audience, the puppet bull cavorted grotesquely, and finally, like a more original and manly Ferdinand, seized the sword from the matador, ran him through, and won the lady for himself.

The Indians laughed uproariously when the doomed bull turned the tables and conquered the conqueror. Here was a revolution in entertainment—an eight-penny puppet show in the very shadow of the pyramid where once human sacrifices had been enacted in gory earnest and maidens had passed in sacrificial procession on their way to be drowned in the Sacred Pool.

That night as I sank into a luxurious inner-spring mattress set in a bed carved with a stylized design of jaguars, the contrasts in time and history seemed no more than aspects of the same dream. The July air was fresh, and sweet with lemon blossoms and mimosa. Sleep came quickly.

At six everyone was awakened. By seven we were on our way to the temples. The natives know how to co-operate with the climate. The guides pay tribute to the sun by remaining in the shade ten to four. In summer, the arranged hours for temple-visiting are seven to ten in the morning and four to six in the afternoon. So the tourist never suffers from the heat or is exhausted with a too-much-ness, though the temples of Chichén Itzá are scattered over a radius of two miles and the visitor must go on foot.

When I viewed the plain that was once the center

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of the holy city and saw the massive white structure luminous in the early morning light, I felt much as those Spanish soldiers did who rushed to tell Cortés that they saw house walls of pure silver.

In the center of the plain, the vast compound mass of El Castillo, the Temple of the Plumed Serpent, is built up solid from the ground seventy-five feet—a pyramid composed of nine receding terraces, with a square pavilion on top. The summit is approached from the four directions of the compass by grand staircases of ninety-one steps each. At the foot of the stairs gigantic feathered snakes lie open-mouthed, with lashing tongues—to Mayan pilgrims an awe-inspiring warning of the world's great snare.

From the high pavilion of the temple there is a splendid sweep of panorama. The landscape is laid out much like a university spread over a hundred acres: some buildings in the open meadows, some half-concealed among the trees. Henry pointed out different tombs, palaces, and pyramids, some audacious in austerity, some richly decorated with trace-ries and mosaics.

Toward whichever corner of the twelve-winded sky I looked there was a work of art and beauty. In this direction stood the Temple of the Tigers; in that, the House of the Dark Writing. The Temple of the Warriors, which I had seen from my bathroom, lay at the northwest corner of the group of the Thousand Columns. In that direction was the rounded Caracol, or Observatory. The Red House was back in the forest. Still farther south was the Nunnery, where the virgins were housed in splendor before they were sacrificed in the sacred cenote.

Exposed to the intense sun, the epigraphic structures stand mysterious, inscrutable, still to be deciphered. Before 1924, most of them were half-buried under the blown dust of centuries. That is why they had been so little known, so rarely visited. The Carnegie Institute, under the inspired leadership of Dr. Sylvanus G. Morley and his trained corps of archaeologists, ethnologists, and anthropologists, has done a superb job of uncovering the grandeur of the past and repairing the ravages of nature. The breath-taking Temple of the Warriors was nothing more than a broad sixty-foot-high hillock of earth overgrown with trees when Dr. Morley guessed at its secret and began to delve. Like John Lloyd Stephens in 1842, he found "a strong and vigorous nature struggling for mastery over art, wrapping the city in its suffocating embrace and burying it from sight."

From El Castillo we went to the Ball Court with small temples set on the ramparts like royal watch

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towers. The place was still in the process of reconstruction. Massive stones lay about like gigantic pieces to be fitted into a mammoth jigsaw puzzle. In this stadium the Mayas had played a ball game called tlachtli or pok-ta-pok. It was a game so strenuous, and often so mortal, that compared to it college football is like a croquet game played in a vicarage garden. For the spectators it combined the excitements of a football game, a heavyweight championship fight, and a major Wall Street speculation. Rulers and warriors and priests bet themselves into a frenzy, some even staking the bondage of their own offspring on the outcome of a game. Tlachtli was a kind of basketball played with a large solid rubber ball. The men played barefoot and naked, except for loincloth and knee guards, and when they were thrown down they crashed not into sod but against the stones of the floor. The goal was to propel the ball through a stone ring set vertically twenty feet high, and just barely large enough for a ball to go through. To touch the ball with hands or feet was against the rules. The players had to punt it with their buttocks, their thighs, or their elbows.

As I stood beneath one of the stone rings and looked up and down the vast walled court, with Henry's promptings I recreated a game in progress, and marveled at the physical vigor of the early Indians. Their athletic prowess was as incredible as the fierce energy and patience that had erected these massive monuments without benefit of modern machinery, without iron or steel, without beasts of burden, without even a wheel. It was small wonder that a people whose ancestors took athletic games so strenuously could keep the mailed Spaniards sixteen years at bay.

At Chichen Itzá, among these temples, raged one of the most bloody of the conquistadors' battles "where Spaniards fought for their own lives—and the Indians to remain masters of their own soil." At last the Spaniards, almost defeated, exhausted, surrounded on three sides by Indians, tied a hungry dog to a clapper of a great bell, putting food before him, but just out of reach. While the dog agitated the clapper frantically, the Indians, thinking it an alarm bell, waited quietly for the attack. The Spaniards stealthily marched from the camp to the coast. All night the Indians waited for the attack that was to be their triumph and the final destruction of the white men. At dawn when the bell continued to ring beyond all reason, they investigated, and found the Spaniards had escaped.

On the way north to the Sacred Well, Henry pointed out the fresh paw prints of a puma on the forest path. And a little farther on he showed me thousands of warrior ants who were constructing a military road for some conquest. "They are vicious

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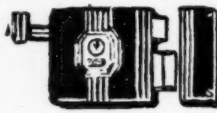
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fighters," Henry said, "and as cruel to their victims as the Spaniards were."

"Do the insects follow man, or does man imitate the insects?" I commented.

"Quien sabe?" Henry answered. "It does seem perversely unreasonable that with a superabundance of earth for any conceivable ant activity the creatures should need to kill their own kind. Yet is it more ridiculous for insects to wage war on their brothers than for mankind to do so? And the art-creating Mayas drowned their most desirable girls to the glory of some imagined god."

In the midst of the forest, the immense water hole, approximately one hundred and fifty feet in diameter, gaped sullenly in the shadows. The water was greenish black and as murky as a Gothic tale. Creepers and vines tangled about the trees, crouching at the rim of the well just above the slow-crumbing stratified walls of purplish gray and rusty black. The stagnant water reflected the pall of dark greenery draped about the rim. After a lapse of centuries, the sacrificial spot still exuded the appropriate sinister atmosphere.

We moved to the rock from which the priests tossed the virgins, who were doped to semiconsciousness and perfumed with incense of copal gum. From here too were hurled male slaves to serve the maidens after death. And pilgrims, come from hundreds of miles distance, would cast in their sacrificial offerings of golden vessels, jeweled bangles, household utensils, or whatever their hearts held dear. An intense silence enshrouded the desolate spot, broken only now and then by the laments of mourning doves and the faint echoes from archaeologists' reviving chisels.

The well, as a part of the expansive sacred city, has known strange ownership. Stephens had found the place in possession of the disinterested Spanish ranchman. A Yankee from Worcester, Massachusetts, named Edward Thompson bought the whole of Chichen Itzá in 1885. For thirty-nine years this extraordinary man was monarch of the most opulent strip of memorial in North America. In a seventeenth-century hacienda he lived like a feudal lord, with temples for next-door neighbors and with uncivilized Indians in the bush behind him. Several times he barely escaped death. Once he was wounded almost fatally when he stumbled into a trap of thorns poisoned with putrefied fox blood. Yet, undaunted he remained, and fathered and reared seven children, and had the time of his life conducting amateur excavations. Don Eduardo grew into a legendary figure, as well as a

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highly respected padrone. Because he was fearless, he was reputed to be able to charm the savagery out of wild beasts, and he was known to win menacing enemies by strumming an old guitar.

When he began dredging the Sacred Pool, he brought up a quantity of skulls and skeletons, sacrificial knives, sandals, copper bells, hard-rubber dolls, jade figurines, balls of copal, and basins of pure gold. These relics he quietly shipped to the Peabody Museum at Harvard University. At last, in 1924, the Mexican Government, hearing a vastly exaggerated rumor of the value and magnitude of these objects—half a million dollars' worth was the alleged estimate—challenged Thompson's four decades' ownership and virtually expelled him from the country. But Don Eduardo had paved the way for the Carnegie Institution's scientific interest in the work that had been his hobby. It was this tough, ingratiating, and romantic Yankee who made the Mexican Government aware of the value of forgotten Chichen Itzá. In 1935, though the ownership of the acres was in litigation and the Mexican Government held a lien on the property, by law the heirs of Edward Thompson still owned the hacienda, and temples beyond price. A neat commentary on the mutations of greatness and legal possession.

What treasure still lies sunk beneath the ooze at the bottom of the well no one knows. Someday the Mexican Government hopes to do a thorough job of dredging. In the meantime men enjoy their speculations.

The routine is back to the Mayaland Lodge by ten or ten-thirty, iced beer, some reading in Mayan history, an informal lecture by Henry, luncheon, and a two-hour siesta. Then off at four to another group of buildings. We saw the Temple of Dates, where Dr. Morley discovered on the underside of a lintel the date which corresponds to A.D. 452. At the threshold of the Nunnery, the plant called "queen's slipper" flourishes—a plant with slender stalks laden with transparent white petals that form a slipper. It looked as if it were the custom for some mythical race of little people to enter here in stocking feet.

In the Phallic Temple, obviously dedicated to phallic worship from all the hardy specimens wrought in stone, there was a musty smell of bats. Before the Temple of the Guards, ants piled up green leaves "to make mushrooms grow under them," said Henry, "for their communistic table." And so we went up and down endless steps, wound about terraces, paused before hieroglyphic writing, admired murals in red, blue,



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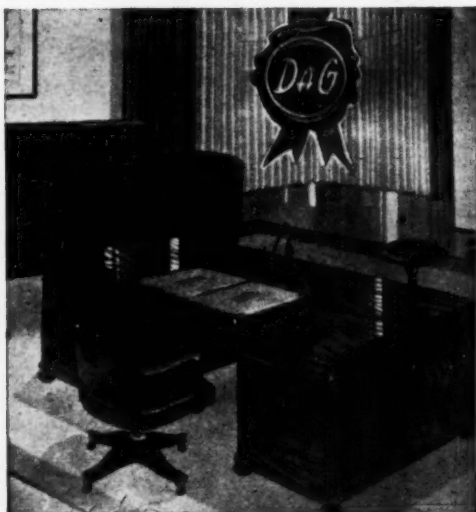
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yellow, and black, looked at bright mosaics, noted a hundred stone representations of pumas, jaguars, feathered serpents, and more unmistakable phallic devices.

Again the sun turned the sky to flame and gold as it set behind a dense screen of branches. The tops of the buildings were fired with sunset tints.

"Look at these buildings now," said Henry. "You see how beautifully careful the architects were never to violate the principles of proportion and mass? And authorities say that in the handling of perspective, the Mayan surpassed all the ancient civilizations." We stood among the half-restored relics in an aura of rigid beauty. "It is difficult to penetrate the mystery," Henry went on, "for the Spanish priests destroyed our books and all the memorials possible of my people. Yet we today are the descendants of those who built these temples. Mayan peasants still strangle turkeys with ceremonial bark beer. Back in the forests to the south, Indians still use bows and arrows and hold to their pagan aboriginal way. And yet our forefathers created these temples, and their genius developed an accurate calendric system." He gestured vaguely toward the rounded tower of the Observatory. In his voice there were pride and wistfulness as he said: "Why do the Americans go to Egypt to see things? Why don't they come first to see what kind of neighbors they might have had if history had not conquered us?"

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